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John Lloyd Stephens

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Incidents of Travel
in
CENTRAL AMERICA,
CHIAPAS, & YUCATAN



BY *John L. Stephens*, ESQ.

VOLUME ONE

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION & NOTES BY

Richard L. Predmore

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Introduction

ALMOST a decade ago I began to read for the first time John L. Stephens' *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatán*.¹ Fascinated by the narrative and charmed by the style, I soon came to think the book deserved to be brought to the attention of the modern reader. Not long after this first acquaintance, while traveling in that part of Central America of which he wrote, I reread some of his descriptions, and, as I read, I was increasingly convinced that his work should find a place among the chosen books of American literature. Upon my return to the United States, for some time other activities directed my attention away from Stephens. There were others, however, who were going back to him and rediscovering the charm which had won him so wide an audience in his own day. In 1944 Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, in the eloquent pages of *The World of Washington Irving*, spoke of Stephens as the greatest of American travel writers. Then in 1947 Mr. V. W. von Hagen published his *Maya Explorer*,² an enthusiastic biography of Stephens. In the same year a memorial plaque was unveiled on his long-forgotten grave in the New York City Marble Cemetery on Second Street. Dr. A. V. Kidder of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, after a brief review of Stephens' eventful life, said in the closing words of his dedicatory address: "But in his own country, and at this spot where the wanderer came finally to rest, it is proper that

1. This and Stephens' other books were all originally published in New York by Harper and Brothers.

2. Published at Norman by the University of Oklahoma Press.

the tablet we dedicate today should perpetuate the memory of a truly great American." At least one further tribute to the great travel writer and the great American would seem to be in order, namely, the republication of his works. With these volumes the undertaking is launched.

John Lloyd Stephens was born in Shrewsbury, New Jersey, in 1805. In 1806 his family moved to New York City, which henceforth was to be his home when he was not wandering or working in distant lands. Stephens acquired most of his formal education in New York, where he was graduated from Columbia College in 1822. From 1822 until 1824 he studied for the bar at Tapping Reeve Law School in Litchfield, Connecticut. Before beginning the practice of law, he toured the Midwest, and it was this trip, no doubt, that awakened the wanderlust which was to carry him to the far places of the earth and make of him the most famous American traveler of his day. Back in New York in 1825, he was soon engaged in the practice of law and politics, a practice which he continued until reasons of health dictated a change of clime.

In the autumn of 1834 Stephens set sail for Europe and the Near East, where he was to spend two adventurous years. Shortly after his return to New York, he published, in 1837, his first book, *Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petraea, and the Holy Land*. The reception accorded it was enthusiastic, and before the enthusiasm cooled, it was followed by *Incidents of Travel in Greece, Turkey, Russia, and Poland*, dated 1838. Hardly had this burst of literary activity subsided when Stephens was off to Central America, Mexico, and Yucatán on a combined diplomatic and archeological expedition. He was accompanied by Frederick Catherwood, an English artist with extensive archeological experience. The two formed an unbeatable team. The results of their labors were published

in 1841 in *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatán*, with text by Stephens and illustrations by Catherwood. This third book was scarcely off the press when Stephens and Catherwood returned to Yucatán for further explorations, which yielded, in 1843, a final *Incidents of Travel in Yucatán*.

The four *Incidents* mentioned above constitute the bulk of Stephens' literary output and his chief title to fame. Nevertheless, his life was not devoid of achievements outside the realm of exploration and literature. He was an official of the Ocean Steam Navigation Company, which in 1847 opened the first transatlantic steamship service between New York and Bremen. He helped to organize the Panama Railroad Company whose purpose it was to connect the two great oceans by rail. First as vice-president and then as president, he became the animating spirit of the enterprise. He spent two winters in the Panamanian jungles supervising the surveys and early construction work. The railroad was not completed until three years after Stephens' death, but its completion must be regarded in large part as a monument to his energy and devotion. Stephens died in New York in 1852, probably as a result of a disease contracted in Panama.

If the reader is dissatisfied with the foregoing meager outline of Stephens' life—and I hope he is—he can do no better than to read Stephens' four famous travel books. In them he will find the best account of the best years of Stephens' short life. For a review of his whole life the reader must turn to his recent biography by Mr. von Hagen.

On the opening page of the account of his travels in this volume, we learn that John L. Stephens and his friend Frederick Catherwood set sail for Belize in British Honduras on the third of October, 1839. Stephens was entrusted by President

Van Buren with a special confidential mission to Central America. But he had already been reading what few books there were about the ancient civilizations of Central America and had nearly completed his plans for an expedition of exploration when he was appointed minister to Central America. His mission, then, was twofold, and both parts contributed to the interest and importance of what he later wrote.

The diplomatic mission sent him in search of the Central American government, which proved to be as elusive as the will-o'-the-wisp. As a matter of fact, Stephens arrived on the scene at a critical time in Central American history. The Confederation of Central American States under the presidency of General Morazán was torn by civil war and was on the very verge of disintegration. The mestizo Rafael Carrera led the separatist forces in Guatemala and was Morazán's chief antagonist. Stephens' personal interviews with these and other leaders, his keen observations of the life of a country at war, his perilous quest for the government to which he was accredited, all of these things make of his book a document of great interest both to the general reader and to the historian.

On the archeological side, Stephens' work is perhaps even more important. He has been called the father of Mayan archeology and there is little doubt that he deserves the title even though he did not claim to be a professional archeologist. Before his time there was no complete and accurate description of any Mayan city. His accounts of cities already known and of the new sites which he discovered were far better than those of his predecessors and remain invaluable to this day. His descriptions and Catherwood's illustrations are the only record of some buildings and monuments now fallen or lost.

In a more general way Stephens' literary skill contributed to the stimulation and development of American archeology by helping to create a widespread interest in the ancient

civilization to the south of us. Stephens' imagination was kindled as he viewed for the first time the imposing ruins of cities long lost in the fastness of the jungle. Dull, indeed, would be the man unresponsive to words like those called forth by the first glimpse of Copán:

. . . America, say historians, was peopled by savages; but savages never reared these structures, savages never carved these stones. When we asked the Indians who made them, their dull answer was *Quién sabe?* (Who knows?) There were no associations connected with the place, none of those stirring recollections which hallow Rome, Athens, and "The world's great mistress on the Egyptian plain." But architecture, sculpture, and painting, all the arts which embellish life had flourished in this overgrown forest; orators, warriors, and statesmen, beauty, ambition, and glory had lived and passed away, and none knew that such things had been, or could tell of their past existence. Books, the records of knowledge, are silent on this theme.

The city was desolate. No remnant of this race hangs round the ruins, with traditions handed down from father to son and from generation to generation. It lay before us like a shattered bark in the midst of the ocean, her masts gone, her name effaced, her crew perished, and none to tell whence she came, to whom she belonged, how long on her voyage, or what caused her destruction—her lost people to be traced only by some fancied resemblance in the construction of the vessel, and, perhaps, never to be known at all.

All of Stephens' books were remarkably successful, but none quite so much so as the present work.³ And the reason is not

3. Between 1841 and 1871 Harpers brought out twelve editions of the book. The first nine "editions," published within a period of three months, are really reprints of the first; the tenth embodies a few changes which are continued in the eleventh and twelfth. The twelfth "edition" was reissued at least eleven times.

far to seek. None embodied quite so rare a combination of ingredients. First of all, there was novelty. In his Eastern and European travels it is true that Stephens visited many out-of-the-way places; yet others had preceded him and the libraries of the world were not silent on his subject. In America he was a pioneer. He brought to an America now ripe for self-discovery the first fair account of its distant past. He initiated a series of works which was to be carried on by such eminent countrymen as William Hickling Prescott and George Bancroft. Then, there was good judgment and painstaking care in the reporting of archeological discoveries and social and political conditions at a time when there were almost no other impartial observers on the scene. Finally, there was boundless charm. Stephens was the kind of man Americans instinctively liked: adventurous, resolute, friendly, and with a sense of humor equal to the trials of traveling under the most primitive conditions. The virile and buoyant spirit which everywhere shines through his writing should render it as appealing today as in the days of its genesis.

In the tenth edition of *Incidents of Travel* Stephens corrected a number of errors in the spelling of Spanish words. In subsequent editions no further changes were made, so that one would serve as well as another for a new edition. For reasons of convenience the present text is based on the twelfth edition published in 1856. This edition has been subjected to the kind of editorial revision described below.

Stephens was a man of unusual literary gifts, but he wrote hurriedly and his manuscripts apparently never received the kind of editorial care they would today. The editor has bent every effort to compensate for the hurried writing and the lack of editorial supervision without destroying the charm and

integrity of the author's style. To this end misspellings and wayward punctuations have been emended, unwieldy sentences and paragraphs have been broken up, occasional phrases have been introduced or deleted to smooth the reader's path. But this is in no sense an abridgment. The editor has performed his task in the hope that his success could be measured by the unobtrusiveness with which it was achieved.

Footnotes have been sparingly used to identify geographical, historical, and literary allusions that might offer some difficulty to the general reader. The editor has taken particular pains to correct place names, to identify those that seemed to need identification, and to give the modern name when the name has changed since the time of Stephens' visit. In a very few instances, Stephens mentions places which apparently have disappeared. At any rate, it has been impossible to find any trace of them. Whenever possible the source of Stephens' historical material has been given. An attempt has been made to indicate briefly the extent to which his speculations about the ancient Mayas have been confirmed by modern scholarship.

Catherwood's drawings of the ruins which he and Stephens explored have always been an important and charming part of *Incidents of Travel*. The great majority of them have been reproduced in the present edition. Of the few omitted, two were so illegible as to be worthless. To make up for this loss there have been added a reproduction of a woodcut of Stephens as he appeared at the age of forty and a newly drawn map of his travels. The latter has been used as end-papers.

To the staff of the Rutgers University Press, and particularly to Miss Ruth Field, I wish to extend my sincere thanks for invaluable help and encouragement. I wish to thank also Mr. W. L. Thomas, Jr., for the painstaking care which he de-

voted to the drawing of the end-papers. My wife knows how much I appreciate her assistance in the arduous task of proof-reading.

Richard L. Predmore

NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

DECEMBER 3, 1948

Incidents of Travel
in
CENTRAL AMERICA,
CHIAPAS, & YUCATAN

Chapter I



Departure. The voyage. Arrival at Belize. Mixing of colors. Government House. Colonel MacDonald. Origin of Belize. Negro schools. Scene in a courtroom. Law without lawyers. The barracks. Excursion in a pitpan. A beginning of honors. Honors accumulating. Departure from Belize. Sweets of office.

HAVING been intrusted by the President with a Special Confidential Mission to Central America, on Wednesday, the third of October, 1839, I embarked on the British brig *Mary Ann* (Hampton, master) for the Gulf of Honduras. The brig was lying in the North River with her anchor apeak and sails loose, and in a few minutes, in company with a large whaling ship bound for the Pacific, we were under way. It was before seven o'clock in the morning. The streets and wharves were still and, although the Battery was desolate, at the moment of leaving on a voyage of uncertain duration it seemed to me more beautiful than I had ever known it.

Opposite the Quarantine Ground, a few friends who had accompanied me on board left; in an hour the pilot followed; at dusk the dark outline of the highlands of Nave-sink was barely visible; and the next morning we were fairly at sea.

My only fellow passenger was Mr. Catherwood, an experienced traveler and personal friend, who had passed more than ten years of his life in diligently studying the antiquities of the Old World. Immediately on receiving my appointment I had engaged him, as one familiar with the

remains of ancient architectural greatness, to accompany me in exploring the ruins of Central America.

Hurried on by a strong northeaster, on the ninth we were within the region of the trade winds, on the tenth within the tropics, and on the eleventh, with the thermometer at 80° but with a refreshing breeze, we were moving gently between Cuba and Santo Domingo with both in full sight. As for the rest of the voyage, after eighteen days of boisterous weather, drenched with tropical rains, on the twenty-ninth we were driven inside the lighthouse reef; avoiding altogether the regular pilot ground, at midnight we reached St. George's Bay, about twenty miles from Belize. A large brig loaded with mahogany was lying at anchor with a pilot on board waiting for favorable weather to put to sea. The pilot had with him his son, a lad about sixteen, cradled on the water, whom Captain Hampton knew and determined to take on board.

It was full moonlight when the boy mounted the deck and gave us the pilot's welcome. I could not distinguish his features, but I could see that he was not white; his voice was as soft as a woman's. He took his place at the wheel and, loading the brig with canvass, told us of the severe gales on the coast, of the fears entertained for our safety, of disasters and shipwrecks, and of a pilot who, on a night which we well remembered, had driven his vessel over a sunken reef.

At seven o'clock the next morning we saw Belize,¹ appearing—if there be no sin in comparing it with cities consecrated by time and venerable associations, like Venice and Alexandria—to rise out of the water. A range of white houses extended a mile along the shore, terminated at one end by the Government House and at the other by the barracks, and intersected by the river Belize, the bridge across which formed a picturesque object. The fort on a little island at the mouth of the river, the spire of a Gothic church behind the Government House, and groves of cocoanut trees, which at that distance reminded us of the palm trees of

1. Belize is the capital of what we now know as British Honduras. Central Americans call the whole territory *Belice*.

Egypt, gave to it all an appearance of actual beauty. Four ships, three brigs, sundry schooners, bungaloes, canoes, and a steamboat, were riding at anchor in the harbor. Alongside the vessels were rafts of mahogany, and far out a negro was paddling a log of the same costly timber. The government dory which boarded us when we came to anchor was also made of the trunk of a mahogany tree.

We landed in front of the warehouse of Mr. Coffin, the consignee of the vessel. There was no hotel in the place, but Mr. Coffin undertook to conduct us to a lady who, he thought, could accommodate us with lodgings. The heavy rain from which we had suffered at sea had reached Belize. The streets were flooded, and in places there were large puddles which were difficult to cross. At the extreme end of the principal street we met the "lady," Miss——, a mulatto woman, who could give us only board, but Mr. Coffin kindly offered us the use of an unoccupied house on the other side of the river to sleep in.

Retracing our steps, for the second time I passed the whole length of the principal street, and the town seemed to me to be in the entire possession of blacks. The bridge, the market place, the streets and stores were thronged with them, and I might have fancied myself in the capital of a negro republic. They were a fine-looking race, tall, straight, and athletic, with skins black, smooth, and glossy as velvet. And they were well dressed, the men in white cotton shirts and trousers, with straw hats, and the women in white frocks with short sleeves and broad red borders, and adorned with large red earrings and necklaces. I could not help remarking that the frock was their only article of dress, and that it was the fashion of these sable ladies to drop this considerably from off the right shoulder, and to raise the skirt, which was held in the left hand, to any height necessary for crossing puddles.

I stopped at the house of a merchant, whom I found at what is called a second breakfast. The gentleman sat on one side of the table and his lady on the other. At the head was a British officer, and opposite him a mulatto; on his left was another officer, and opposite him also a mulatto. By chance

a place was made for me between the two colored gentlemen; some of my countrymen, perhaps, would have hesitated about taking it, but I did not. Both were well dressed, well educated, and polite. They talked of their mahogany works, of England, hunting, horses, ladies, and wine. Before I had been an hour in Belize I learned that the great work of practical racial amalgamation, the subject of so much angry controversy at home, had been going on quietly here for generations; that color was considered a mere matter of taste; and that some of the most respectable inhabitants had black wives and mongrel children, whom they educated with as much care, and made money for with as much zeal, as if their skins were perfectly white. I hardly knew whether to be shocked or amused at this condition of society.

Rejoining Mr. Catherwood we went to visit the house offered by Mr. Coffin, which was situated on the opposite side of the river. The road to it was ankle deep in mud; at the gate was a large puddle, which we cleared by a jump. The house was built on piles about two feet high, and underneath was water nearly a foot deep. We ascended on a plank to the sill of the door and entered a large room occupying the whole of the first floor and perfectly empty. The upper story was tenanted by a family of negroes; in the yard was a house swarming with negroes; and all over, in the yard and in front, were picturesque groups of little negroes of both sexes, naked as they were born. We directed the room to be swept and our luggage brought there. As we left the house, we remembered Captain Hampton's description and felt the point of his concluding remark that "Belize was the last place made."

While longing for the comfort of a good hotel, we received through Mr. Goff, the consul of the United States, an invitation from His Excellency, Colonel MacDonald, to the Government House, and information that he would send the government dory to the brig for our luggage. As this was the first appointment I had ever held from government and I was not sure of ever holding another, I deter-

mined to make the most of it and accepted at once His Excellency's invitation.

There was a steamboat for Izabal, the port of Guatemala, lying at Belize, and on my way to the Government House I called upon Señor Comyano, the agent, who told me that she was to sail the next day, but added with great courtesy that, if I wished it, he would detain her a few days for my convenience. Used to submitting to the despotic regulations of steamboat agents at home, this seemed a higher honor than the invitation of His Excellency, but not wishing to push my fortune too far I asked a delay of one day only.

The Government House stands in a handsome situation at the extreme end of the town, with a lawn extending to the water and ornamented with cocoanut trees. Colonel MacDonald, a veteran six feet tall, and one of the most military-looking men I have ever seen, received me at the gate. In an hour the dory arrived with our luggage, and at five o'clock we sat down to dinner. We had at table Mr. Newport, chaplain and for fifteen years parish clergyman at Belize; Mr. Walker, secretary of the government, who held, in addition, such a list of offices as would make the greatest pluralist among us feel insignificant; and several other gentlemen of Belize, officeholders, civil and military, in whose agreeable society we sat till eleven o'clock.

The next day we had to make preparations for our journey into the interior and to make use of our opportunity to see a little of Belize. The Honduras Almanac, which assumes to be the chronicler of this settlement, throws a romance around its early history by ascribing its origin to a Scotch buccaneer named Wallace. The fame of the wealth of the New World and the return of the Spanish galleons laden with riches of Mexico and Peru brought upon the coast of America hordes of adventurers—to call them by no harsher name—from England and France. Wallace,² one of the most noted and daring of these men, found refuge and

2. Local tradition has it that "Belize" is a corruption of the name of this seventeenth-century Scotch buccaneer. Another view derives "Belize" from the French *balise*, meaning "harbor beacon."

security behind the keys and reefs which protect the harbor of Belize. The place where he built his log huts and fortalice is still pointed out, but the site is now occupied by warehouses. Strengthened by a close alliance with the Indians of the Mosquito shore, and by the adhesion of numerous British adventurers, who descended upon the coast of Honduras for the purpose of cutting mahogany, he set the Spaniards at defiance. Ever since, the territory of Belize has been the subject of negotiation and contest, and to this day the people of Central America³ claim it as their own. It grew by the exportation of mahogany but, since the supply of trees in the neighborhood is rapidly being exhausted and Central America so impoverished by wars that it offers but a poor market for British goods, the place is languishing, and will probably continue to dwindle away until the enterprise of her merchants discovers other channels of trade.⁴

At this day it contains a population of six thousand, of which four thousand are blacks who are employed by the merchants in gangs as mahogany cutters. Their condition had always been better than that of plantation slaves; even before the act for the general abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions, they were actually free, and on the thirty-first of August, 1839, a year before the time appointed by the act, by a general meeting and agreement of proprietors, even the nominal yoke of bondage was removed.

The event was celebrated, says the Honduras Almanac, by religious ceremonies, processions, bands of music, and banners with such devices as: "The sons of Ham respect the memory of Wilberforce";⁵ "The Queen, God bless her"; "M'Donald forever"; "Civil and religious liberty all over the world." Nelson Schaw, "a snowdrop of the first water,"

3. At the time of Stephens' visit, Central America was a confederation of five states which were in the throes of civil war. These states have since become independent countries. Guatemala still maintains the claim to Belize.

4. Stephens' prediction concerning Belize has not been borne out. Today it has a population of more than seventeen thousand.

5. William Wilberforce (1759-1833) was an English philanthropist famous for his efforts to abolish the slave trade.

continues the Almanac, "advanced to his excellency, Colonel M'Donald, and spoke as follows: 'On the part of my emancipated brothers and sisters, I venture to approach your excellency, to entreat you to thank our most gracious Queen for all that she has done for us. We will pray for her; we will fight for her; and, if it is necessary, we will die for her. We thank you excellency for all you have done for us. God bless your excellency! God bless her excellency, Mrs. M'Donald, and all the royal family! Come, my countymen, hurrah! Dance, ye black rascals; the flag of England flies over your heads, and every rustle of its folds knocks the fetters off the limbs of the poor slave. Hubbabboo Cochalarum Gee!'"

The negro schools stood in the rear of the Government House, and the boys' department consisted of about two hundred boys from three to fifteen years of age and of every degree of tinge from nearly white down to the black of two little native Africans bearing on their cheeks the scars of cuts made by their parents at home. These two boys were taken from a slave ship captured and brought into Belize by an English cruiser. As provided for by the laws, on a drawing by lot, they fell to the share of a citizen who, upon entering into certain covenants for good treatment, was entitled to their services until they were twenty-one years old. Unfortunately, the master of the school was not present and I had no opportunity of learning the result of his experience in teaching; but in this school, I was told, the brightest boys and those who had improved most were those who had in them the most white blood.

The mistress of the female department had had great experience in teaching and she told us that, though she had had many clever black girls under her charge, her white scholars were always the most quick and capable.

From the negro school we went to the Grand Court. It had been open about half an hour when I entered. On the back wall, in a massive mahogany tablet, were the arms of England; on a high platform beneath was a large circular table around which were heavy mahogany chairs with high backs and cushions. The court consisted of seven judges, five

of whom were in their places. One of them, Mr. Walker, invited me to one of the vacant seats. I objected on the ground that my costume was not becoming so dignified a position, but he insisted, and I, in a roundabout jacket, took my seat in a chair exceedingly comfortable for the administration of justice.

Of the five judges who were in their places, one was a mulatto. The jury was empaneled and two of the jurors were mulattoes; one of them, as the judge who sat next to me said, was a Sambo, or of the descending line, being the son of a mulatto woman and a black man. I was at a loss to determine the caste of a third juror and inquired of the judge, who answered that he was his, the judge's, brother, and that his mother was a mulatto woman. The judge was aware of the feeling which existed in the United States with regard to color, and said that in Belize there was, in political life, no distinction whatever, except on the ground of qualifications and character, and hardly any in social life, even in contracting marriages.

I had noticed the judges and jurors, but I missed an important part of an English court. Where were the gentlemen of the bar? Some of my readers will perhaps concur with Captain Hampton's observation that Belize was the last place made, when I tell them that there was not a single lawyer in the place and never had been. Lest some of my enterprising professional brethren should forthwith be tempted to pack their trunks for a descent upon the exempt city, I consider it my duty to add that I do not believe there is the least chance for one.

As there is no bar to prepare men for the bench, the judges, of course, are not lawyers. Of the five then sitting, two were merchants, one a mahogany cutter, and the mulatto, second to none of the others in character or qualifications, a doctor. This court is the highest tribunal for the trial of civil causes, and has jurisdiction of all amounts above £15. Belize is a place of large commercial transactions; contracts are daily made and broken, or misunderstood, which require the intervention of some proper tribunal to interpret and compel their fulfillment. There was no absence of liti-

gation, the calendar was large, and the courtroom crowded. The first cause called was upon an account; when the defendant did not appear a verdict was taken by default. In the next, the plaintiff stated his case and swore to it; the defendant answered and called witnesses, and the cause was submitted to the jury. There was no case of particular interest. In one the parties became excited, and the defendant interrupted the plaintiff repeatedly, on which the latter, putting his hand upon the shoulder of his antagonist, said in a coaxing way, "Now don't, George; wait a little, you shall have your turn. Don't interrupt me, and I won't you." All was done in a familiar and colloquial way; the parties were more or less known to each other, and judges and jurors were greatly influenced by knowledge of general character. I remarked that regularly the merits of the case were so clearly brought out that when it was committed to the jury there was no question about the verdict. So satisfactory has this system proved that, though an appeal lies to the Queen in Council, as Mr. Evans, the foreman, told me, but one cause has been carried up in twenty-two years. Still it stands as an anomaly in the history of English jurisprudence for, I believe, in every other place where the principles of the common law govern, the learning of the bench and the ingenuity of the bar are considered necessary to elicit the truth.

At daylight the next morning I was roused by Mr. Walker for a ride to the barracks. There are no wheel carriages in Belize because there are no roads except the one we followed to the barracks. Immediately beyond the suburbs we entered upon an uncultivated country, low and flat, but very rich. We passed a racecourse, now disused and grown over. Between Belize and the inhabited part of Central America there is only wilderness unbroken even by an Indian path. The Golfo Dulce and the Belize River offer the only means of communication with the interior; from the want of roads, residence in Belize is more confining than living on an island.

In half an hour we reached the barracks, situated on the opposite side of a small bay. The soldiers were all black

and were part of an old Jamaica regiment, most of them having been enlisted at English recruiting stations in Africa. Tall and athletic, with red coats, standing in a line bristling with steel, their ebony faces gave them a peculiarly warlike appearance. They carried themselves proudly, called themselves the "Queen's Gentlemen," and looked down with contempt upon the "niggers."

We returned to breakfast and immediately after made an excursion in the government pitpan. This was the same fashion of boat in which the Indians navigated the rivers of America before the Spaniards discovered it. European ingenuity had not contrived a better, though it had perhaps beautified the Indian model. Ours was about forty feet long and six feet wide in the center, running to a point at both ends, and made of the trunk of a mahogany tree. Ten feet from the stern, and running forward, was a light wooden top supported by fanciful stanchions, with curtains for protection against sun and rain. With its large cushioned seats it was fitted up almost as neatly as the gondolas of Venice. It was manned by eight negro soldiers; six sat two on a seat with paddles six feet long, and two stood up behind with paddles as steersmen. A few touches of the paddles gave brisk way to the pitpan, and we passed rapidly the whole length of the town. It was an unusual thing for His Excellency's pitpan to be upon the water; citizens stopped to gaze at us and all the idle negroes hurried to the bridge to cheer us. This excited our African boatmen, who, with a wild chant that reminded us of the songs of the Nubian boatmen on the Nile, swept under the bridge and hurried us into the still expanse of a majestic river. Before the cheering of the negroes died away we were in as perfect a solitude as if removed thousands of miles from human habitation. The Belize River, coming from sources but little known to civilized man, was then in its fullness. On each side was a dense, unbroken forest. The banks were overflowed and the trees seemed to grow out of the water. Their branches, spreading across so as almost to shut out the light of the sun were reflected in the water as in a mirror. The sources of the river were occupied by the aboriginal owners, wild and free as Cortes found them. We had an eager de-

sire to follow the stream to the famous Lake of Petén,⁶ where the skeleton of the conquering Spaniard's horse⁷ had been erected into a god by the astonished Indians, but the toil of our boatmen reminded us that they were paddling against a rapid current. We turned the pitpan and, with the full power of the stream and with a pull stronger and a chant louder than before, amid the increased cheering of the negroes we swept under the bridge and in a few minutes landed at the Government House.

In order that we might embark for Izabal at the hour appointed, Colonel MacDonald had ordered dinner for two o'clock and, as on the two preceding days, had invited a small party to meet us. Perhaps I am wrong, but I should do violence to my feelings did I fail to express here my sense of the Colonel's kindness. My invitation to the Government House was the fruit of my official character, but I cannot help flattering myself that some portion of the kindness shown me was the result of personal acquaintance. Colonel MacDonald was a soldier of the Napoleonic Wars, the brother of Sir John MacDonald, adjutant-general of England, and the cousin of Marshal MacDonald of France. All his connections and associations were military. At eighteen he entered Spain as an ensign, one of an army of ten thousand men, of whom, in less than six months, but four thousand were left. After being actively engaged in all the trying service of the Peninsular War, at Waterloo he commanded a regiment, and on the field of battle received the order of Companion of the Military Order of the Bath from the King of England, and that of Knight of the Order of St. Anne from the Emperor of Russia. Rich in recollections of a long military life, personally acquainted with the public and private characters of the most distinguished military men of the age, his conversation was like reading a page of history. He is one of a race that is fast passing away and with whom an American seldom meets.

But to return to dinner. The large window of the dining-room opened upon the harbor; the steamboat lay in front

6. In the lowland jungles of northern Guatemala.

7. A sick horse left by Cortes on his march to Honduras.

of the Government House, and the black smoke, rising in columns from her pipe, gave notice that it was time to embark. Before rising, Colonel MacDonald, like a loyal subject, proposed the health of the Queen, after which he ordered the glasses to be filled to the brim and standing up gave, "The health of Mr. Van Buren, President of the United States," accompanying it with a warm and generous sentiment and the earnest hope of strong and perpetual friendship between England and America. I felt at the moment "cursed by the hand that attempts to break it," and albeit unused to taking the President and the people of my country upon my shoulders, I answered as well as I could. Another toast followed to the health and successful journey of Mr. Catherwood and myself, and we rose from the table.

Colonel MacDonald put his arm through mine and as we walked toward the government dory which lay at the foot of the lawn, he told me that I was going into a distracted country; that Mr. Savage, the American consul in Guatemala, had on a previous occasion protected the property and lives of British subjects; and that, if danger threatened me, I must assemble the Europeans, hang out my flag, and send word to him. I knew that these were not mere words of courtesy and, in the state of the country to which I was going, felt the value of such a friend at hand. With the warmest feelings of gratitude I bade him farewell and stepped into the dory. At the moment flags were run up at the government staff, the fort, the courthouse, and the government schooner, and a gun was fired from the fort. As I crossed the bay, a salute of thirteen guns was fired. Passing the fort, the soldiers presented arms, the government schooner lowered and raised her ensign, and when I mounted the deck of the steamboat, the captain, with hat in hand, told me that he had instructions to place her under my orders and to stop wherever I pleased.

The reader will perhaps ask how I bore all these honors. I had visited many cities, but it was the first time that flags and cannon announced to the world that I was going away. I was a novice, but I endeavored to behave as if I had been brought up to it; to tell the truth, my heart beat and I felt

proud, for these were honors paid to my country, and not to me.

To crown the glory of the parting scene, my good friend Captain Hampton had charged his two four-pounders and, when the steamboat got under way, he fired one, but the other would not go off. The captain of the steamboat had on board one puny gun, with which he would have returned all their civilities, but, as he told me, to his great mortification he had no powder.

The steamboat in which we embarked was the last remnant of the stock in trade of a great Central American agricultural association formed for building cities, raising the price of land, accommodating emigrants, and improvement generally. On the rich plains of the province of Verapaz⁸ they had established the site of New Liverpool, which only wanted houses and a population to become a city. On the wheel of the boat was a brass circular plate on which in strange juxtaposition were the words "Vera Paz," "London." The captain was a small, weather-beaten, dried-up old Spaniard, with courtesy enough for a don of old. The engineer was an Englishman, and the crew were Spaniards, mestizos, and mulattoes, not particularly at home in the management of a steamboat.

Our only fellow passenger was a Roman Catholic priest, a young Irishman, who had been eight months at Belize. He was now on his way to Guatemala by invitation of the provisor, who, by the exile of the archbishop, was the head of the church in Central America. The cabin was very comfortable, but the evening was so mild that we took our tea on deck. At ten o'clock the captain came to me for orders. I have had my aspirations, but I never expected to be able to dictate to the captain of a steamboat. Nevertheless, again as coolly as if I had been brought up to it, I designated the places I wished to visit and retired. Verily, thought I, if these are the fruits of official appointments, it is not strange that men are found willing to accept them.

8. Below the Petén in northern Guatemala there are now two departments called Alta Verapaz and Baja Verapaz.

Chapter II

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*Everyone for himself. Travelers' tricks. Punta Gorda. A visit to the Carib Indians. A Carib crone. A baptism. Río Dulce. Beautiful scenery. Izabal. Reception of the padre. A barber in office. A band of "Invincibles." Parties in Central America. A compatriot. A grave in a foreign land. Preparations for the passage of "the Mountain." A road not macadamized. Perils by the way. A well-spiced lunch. The mountain passed.*

WE had engaged a young servant, a French Spaniard, Santo Domingo born and Omoa bred, bearing the name of Augustin, who we at first thought was not very sharp. Early in the morning he asked us what we would have for breakfast, naming eggs, chickens, etc. We gave him directions, and in due time sat down to breakfast. During the meal something occurred to put us on inquiry, and we learned that everything on the table, excepting the tea and coffee, belonged to the padre. Without asking any questions or thinking of the subject at all, we had taken for granted that the steamboat made all necessary provisions for passengers, but, to our surprise, we discovered that the boat furnished nothing, that passengers were expected to take care of themselves. The padre had been as ignorant and as improvident as we; but some good Catholic friends, whom he had married or whose children he had baptized, had sent on board contributions of various kinds, among other things—odd luggage for a traveler—a coop full of chickens. We congratulated the padre upon his good fortune in having us with him, and ourselves upon such a treasure as Augustin.

I may mention, by the way, that in the midst of Colonel MacDonald's hospitalities Mr. Catherwood and I exhibited rather too much of the old traveler. During our last dinner with the Colonel, Mr. Catherwood was called from the table to superintend the removal of some luggage. Shortly after, I, too, was called out and—fortunately for Colonel MacDonald and the reputation of my country—I found Mr. Catherwood quietly rolling up to send back to New York a large blue cloak belonging to the Colonel, supposing it to be mine. I returned to the table and mentioned to our host his narrow escape, adding that I was beginning to have some doubt about a large canvass sack for bedding which I had found in my room. Presuming it to be one that had been promised me by Captain Hampton, I had had it put on board the steamboat. This too, it turned out, belonged to Colonel MacDonald and for many years it had carried his camp bed. The Colonel insisted, however, that we use it, and I am afraid it was pretty well worn out before he received it back again. The reader will infer from all this that Mr. Catherwood and I, with the help of Augustin, were fit persons to travel in any country.

As we left Belize, our course lay nearly south, directly along the coast of Honduras. In his last voyage Columbus discovered this part of the Continent of America, but its verdant beauties could not win him to the shore. Without landing he continued on to the Isthmus of Darien in search of that passage to India which was the aim of all his hopes, but which it was destined he should never see.

Steamboats have destroyed some of the most pleasing illusions of my life. I had been hurried up the Hellespont, past Sestos and Abydos and the Plain of Troy, under the clatter of a steam engine; and now to follow the track of Columbus accompanied by the clamor of the same panting monster, struck at the root of all the romance connected with his adventures. Nevertheless, the day was beautiful with a hot sun and a refreshing breeze, and we found it very pleasant to sit on the deck under the shelter of an awning. The coast assumed an appearance of grandeur and beauty that realized my ideas of tropical regions. There was a dense for-

est to the water's edge. Beyond were lofty mountains covered to their tops with perpetual green, some isolated, others running off in ranges higher and higher till they were lost in the clouds.

At eleven o'clock we came in sight of Punta Gorda, a settlement of Carib Indians about a hundred and fifty miles down the coast, and the first place at which I had directed the captain to stop. As we approached we saw an opening on the water's edge with a range of low houses, reminding me of a clearing in our forests at home. It was but a speck on the great line of coast. On both sides were primeval trees and behind towered an extraordinary mountain, apparently broken into two like the back of a two-humped camel. As the steamboat turned in where steamboat had never been before, the whole village was in commotion: women and children were running on the bank, and four men descended into the water and came off in a canoe to meet us.

Our fellow passenger, the padre, during his residence at Belize had become acquainted with many of the Caribs and, upon one occasion, by invitation from its chief, had visited a settlement for the purpose of marrying and baptizing the inhabitants. He asked whether we had any objections to his taking advantage of the opportunity to do the same here. As we had none, at the moment of disembarking he appeared on deck with a large washhand basin in one hand, and in the other, a well-filled pocket handkerchief containing his priestly vestments.

We anchored a short distance from the beach and went ashore in the small boat. We landed at the foot of a bank about twenty feet high and, ascending to the top, came at once under a burning sun into all the richness of tropical vegetation. Besides cotton and rice, the cajun, banana, coconut, pineapple, orange, lemon, plantain, and many other fruits which we did not know even by name were growing with such luxuriance that at first their very fragrance was oppressive. Under the shade of these trees most of the inhabitants were gathered, and the padre immediately gave notice, in a wholesome way, that he had come to marry and baptize them. After a short consultation a house was selected for the performance of the ceremonies, and Mr. Catherwood

and I, under the guidance of a Carib who had picked up a little English in his canoe expeditions to Belize, walked through the settlement.

It consisted of about five hundred inhabitants. Their native place was on the seacoast below Truxillo within the government of Central America. Having taken an active part against Morazán,<sup>1</sup> when his party became dominant they had fled to their present location within the limits of the British authority. Though living apart as a tribe of Caribs, not mingling their blood with that of their conquerors, they were nevertheless completely civilized. They did retain, however, the Indian passion for beads and ornaments. The houses or huts were built of poles about an inch thick, set upright in the ground, tied together with bark strings, and thatched with cahoon leaves; some had partitions and bedsteads made of the same material. In every house were a grass hammock and a figure of the Virgin or of some tutelary saint. We were exceedingly struck with the great progress in civilization made by these descendants of cannibals, the fiercest of all the Indian tribes encountered by the Spaniards.

The houses extended along the bank at some distance apart; before reaching the last of them we found the heat so oppressive that we decided to turn back, but our guide urged us to go on and see "one old woman," his grandmother. We followed him and saw her. She was very old; no one knew her age, but it was considerably over a hundred. What gave her more interest in our eyes than the circumstance of her being the grandmother of our guide was that she came from the island of St. Vincent, the residence of the most indomitable portion of her race, and that she had never been baptized. She received us with an idiotic laugh. Her figure was shrunken, her face shriveled, weakened, and wicked; she looked indeed as though in her youth she might have gloried in dancing at a feast of human flesh.

We returned to the padre and found our friend dressed in the contents of his pocket handkerchief, quite a respectable-looking priest. By his side was our steamboat washbowl

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1. Morazán was president of the Confederation of Central American States at the time of Stephens' visit (see pp. 156-157).

filled with holy water, and in his hand was a prayer book. Nearby stood Augustin holding the stump of a tallow candle.

The Caribs, like most of the other Indians of Central America, have received the doctrines of Christianity as presented to them by the priests and monks of Spain, and are in all things strict observers of the forms prescribed. In this settlement the visit of a padre was a rare but welcome occurrence. At first they seemed to have a suspicion that our friend was not orthodox because he did not speak Spanish, but when they saw him in his gown and surplice with the burning incense, all distrust vanished.

There was little to be done in the way of marrying, because of scarcity of men for that purpose; most of them were away fishing or at work. But a long file of women presented themselves, each with a child in her arms, for baptism. They were arranged around the wall in a circle, and the padre began. He asked the first mother a question which I believe is not to be found in the book, and which, in some places, it would be considered impertinent to put to one offering her child for initiation into the Church, that is, whether she was married. She hesitated, smiled, laughed, and answered No. The padre told her that this was very wrong and unbecoming a good Christian woman, and advised her to take advantage of the present opportunity to marry the child's father. She answered that she would like to do so, but that he was away cutting mahogany. As his questions and her answers had to pass through an interpreter, the affair began to get complicated; indeed, so many of the women interposed, all speaking at once, that the padre became aware that he had touched upon delicate ground and decided to quickly pass on to the next case.

In fact, the baptism service itself gave our friend more than enough to do. He understood but little Spanish and his book was in Latin. Not being able to translate as readily as the occasion required, he had employed the interval of our absence in copying on a slip of paper from a Spanish Protestant prayer book the formal part of the service. In the confusion this had been lost, and the padre was thrown back upon his Latin, to be translated into Spanish as required.

After laboring awhile, he turned to Augustin and gave him in English the questions to put to the women. Augustin was a good Catholic and listened to him with as much respect as if he had been the Pope, but did not understand a word he said. I explained to Augustin in French, who explained to one of the men in Spanish, who explained to the women. This, of course, led to confusion; but all were so devout and respectful that in spite of these tribulations the ceremony was solemn. When he came to the Latin parts, our friend rattled it off as fast as if fresh from the Propaganda<sup>2</sup> at Rome, and the Caribs were not much behindhand.

The padre had told us of the passion of the Caribs for a multiplicity of names. One of the women, after giving her child three or four, pointed to me and told the padre to add mine. I am not very strict, but I did not care to assume wantonly the obligations of a godfather. Stopping the ceremony, I begged the padre to get me released with the best grace he could and he promised to do so. But it was an excessively hot day, the room was crowded, the doors choked up, and by this time the padre, with his Latin, and English, and French, and Spanish, was in a profuse perspiration and somewhat confused. I thought myself clear until a few moments later a child was passed along for me to take in my arms. I was relieved on one point: I thought that it was the lady who had become a mother without being a wife who wished her child to bear my name, but fortunately its mother was an honest woman and the father stood by at the time. Still I most ungallantly avoided receiving the baby. On going away, however, the woman intercepted me and, thrusting forward the infant, called me *compadre*, so that without knowing it I became godfather to a Carib child. In all probability I shall never have much to do with its training; I can only hope that in due season it will multiply the name and make it respectable among the Caribs.

We returned to the steamboat and in a few minutes were again under way, steering for the Río Dulce. An amphitheater of lofty mountains stretched for many miles along

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2. The College of Propaganda in Rome where priests are educated for missionary work.

the coast and back, until finally they were lost to the sight. In one small place this lofty range opens for the passage of a gentle river. On the right bank of the coast was one of the places I intended to visit. It was called by the familiar name of Livingston, in honor of the distinguished citizen of Louisiana whose criminal code had been introduced into Guatemala. It had been supposed, so advantageous was its position, that it would become the port of entry of Central America, but these expectations were not realized.<sup>3</sup>

It was four o'clock in the afternoon as we steered toward the bank, and the captain told me that if we cast anchor it would be necessary to lie there till morning. I was loath to lose the only opportunity I should probably ever have of stopping a steamboat; but I had an eager, almost a burning curiosity to see the Golfo Dulce, and we all agreed that it would be wanton to lose such an opportunity of seeing it to advantage. I therefore directed the captain just to move close to the bank and then pass on.

The bank was elevated about thirty feet above the water, and was as rich and luxuriant as at Punta Gorda. The site of the intended city was occupied by another tribe of Caribs, who, like the Caribs at Punta Gorda, having been driven from their home by war, had followed up the coast and, with that eye for the picturesque and beautiful in natural scenery which distinguished the Indians everywhere, had fixed themselves upon this spot. Their leaf-thatched huts were ranged along the bank, shaded by groves of plantain and coconut trees. Canoes with sails set were lying on the water, and men and women were sitting under the trees gazing at us. It was a soft and sunny scene, speaking peace and freedom from the tumults of a busy world.

But, beautiful as it was, we soon forgot it, for a narrow opening in a rampart of mountains wooed us on, and in a few moments we entered the Río Dulce. On each side, rising perpendicularly from three to four hundred feet, was a wall

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3. Although Livingston has shown some growth since Stephens' time, expectations that it would become the port of entry to Central America are still not realized.

of living green. Trees grew from the water's edge with dense, unbroken foliage to the top; not a spot of barrenness was to be seen. On both sides, from the tops of the highest trees, long tendrils descended to the water, as if to drink and carry life to the trunks that bore them. It was, as its name imports, a Río Dulce, a fairy scene of Titan land, combining exquisite beauty with colossal grandeur. As we advanced the passage turned, and in a few minutes we lost sight of the sea and were enclosed on all sides by a forest wall; but the river, although showing us no passage, still invited us onward. Could this be the portal to a land of volcanoes and earthquakes, to one torn and distracted by civil war? For some time we looked in vain for a single barren spot. At length we saw a naked wall of perpendicular rock, but out of the crevices, and apparently out of the rock itself, grew shrubs and trees. Sometimes we were so enclosed that it seemed as if the boat must drive in among the trees. Occasionally, in an angle of the turns, the wall sank and the sun struck in with scorching force, but in a moment we would be again in the deepest shade. From the fanciful accounts we had heard we expected to see monkeys gamboling among the trees and parrots flying over our heads, but all was as quiet as if man had never been here before. The pelican, the stillest of birds, was the only living thing we saw, and the only sound was the unnatural bluster of our steam engine. The wild defile that leads to the excavated city of Petra is not more noiseless or more extraordinary, but its sterile desolation is in strange contrast to the luxuriant, romantic, and beautiful which is everywhere here.

For nine miles the passage continued thus, one scene of unvarying beauty, then suddenly the narrow river expanded into a large lake, encompassed by mountains and studded with islands, which the setting sun illuminated with gorgeous splendor. We remained on deck till a late hour, and awoke the next morning in the harbor of Izabal. A single schooner of about forty tons showed the low state of her commerce. We landed before seven o'clock in the morning, and even then it was hot. There were no idlers on the bank, and there was only the customhouse officer to receive us.



The town stands on a gentle elevation on the banks of the Golfo Dulce, with mountains piled upon mountains behind. We walked up the street to the square on one side of which was the house of Messrs. Ampudia and Pulleiro, the largest and, except for one they were engaged in building, the only frame house in the place, the rest being huts built of poles and reeds and thatched with leaves of the cajun plant. Opposite their door was a large shed, under which were bales of merchandise, and mules, muleteers, and Indians for transporting goods across Mico Mountain.

The arrival of the padre created a great sensation. It was announced by a joyful ringing of the church bells, and within an hour he was dressed in his surplice and saying mass. The church stood at the head of the square and, like the houses, was built of poles and thatched with leaves. In front, at a distance of ten or fifteen feet, was a large wooden cross. The floor was of bare earth, but swept clean and strewn with pine leaves; the sides were trimmed with branches and festoons of flowers; and the altar was ornamented with figures of the Virgin and saints and wreaths of flowers. It had been a long time since the people had had the privilege of hearing mass, and the whole population—Spaniards, mestizos, and Indians—answered the unexpected but welcome call of the matin bell. The floor was covered with kneeling women with white shawls over their heads, and behind, leaning against the rude pillars, were the men. Their earnestness and humility, the earthen floor and the thatched roof, were more imposing than the pomp of worship in the rich cathedrals of Europe or under the dome of St. Peter's.

After breakfast we inquired for a barber and were referred to the collector of the port, who, we were told, was the best haircutter in the place. His house was no bigger than his neighbors', but inside hung a military saddle with holsters and pistols, and a huge sword, the accouterments of the collector when he sallied out at the head of his one-man deputy to strike terror into the heart of a smuggler. Unfortunately, the honest democrat was not at home, but the deputy offered his own services. Mr. Catherwood and I submitted; but the padre, who wanted his crown shaved accord-

ing to the rules of his order, determined to await the return of the collector.

I next called upon the commandant with my passport. His house was on the opposite side of the square. A soldier about fourteen years old, with a bell-crowned straw hat falling over his eyes like an extinguisher upon a candle, was standing at the door as sentinel. The troops, consisting of about thirty men and boys, were drawn up in front, and a sergeant was smoking a cigar and drilling them. The uniform purported to be a white straw hat, cotton trousers with shirt worn outside, and a musket and cartridge box. In one particular, uniformity was strictly observed: all were barefooted. The customary first process of calling off rank and file was omitted; as it happened, a long-legged fellow, six feet tall, stood next to a boy twelve or thirteen years old. The customhouse officer was with the sergeant, advising him. After a maneuver and a consultation, the sergeant walked up to the line and with the palm of his hand struck a soldier on that part of the body which, in my younger days, was considered by the schoolmaster the channel of knowledge into a boy's brain.

The commandant of this hopeful band was Don Juan Peñol, a gentleman by birth and education, who with others of his family had been banished by General Morazán, and sought refuge in the United States. His predecessor, who was an officer of Morazán, had been just driven out by the Carrera party, and Don Juan had been but twenty days in his place.

Three great parties at that time distracted Central America: that of Morazán, the former president of the Republic, in El Salvador; of Ferrera<sup>4</sup> in Honduras; and of Carrera in Guatemala. Ferrera, a mulatto, and Carrera, an Indian, though not fighting for any common purpose, were in sympathetic opposition to Morazán. When Mr. Montgomery<sup>5</sup> visited Guatemala, it had been just thrown into a ferment by

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4. Francisco Ferrera (1794-1851), general and president. For Stephens' detailed discussion of Morazán and Carrera, see Chap. XI.

5. G. W. Montgomery, author of *Narrative of a Journey to Guatemala in Central America in 1838* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1839).

the rising of Carrera, who was then regarded as the head of a troop of banditti, a robber and assassin. His followers were called *Cachurecos* and Mr. Montgomery told me that against him an official passport would be no protection whatever. Now he was the head of the party that ruled Guatemala. Señor Peñol gave us a melancholy picture of the state of the country. A battle had just been fought near San Salvador between General Morazán and Ferrera. Morazán had been wounded but Ferrera had been routed and his troops cut to pieces. Señor Peñol feared Morazán was about to march upon Guatemala. He could only give us a passport to Guatemala, which he said would not be respected by General Morazán. We felt interested in the position of Señor Peñol, a young man whose face bore the marks of care and anxiety, a consciousness of the miserable condition of the present, and fearful forebodings for the future. To our great regret, the intelligence we received induced our friend the padre to abandon for the present his intention of going to Guatemala City. He had heard all the terrible stories of Morazán's persecution and proscription of the priests and thought it dangerous to fall into his hands; I have reason to believe it was the apprehension of this which ultimately drove him from the country.

Toward evening I strolled through the town. The population consists of about fifteen hundred Indians, negroes, mulattoes, mestizos, and mixed blood of every degree, with a few Spaniards. Very soon I was accosted by a man who called himself my countryman, a mulatto from Baltimore whose name was Philip. He had been eight years in Guatemala and said that he had once thought of returning home as a servant by way of New Orleans, but that he had left home in such a hurry he had forgotten to bring with him his "Christian papers," from which I inferred that he was what would be called in Maryland a runaway slave. He was a man of considerable standing, being fireman on board the steamboat at \$23 a month; he also did odd jobs at carpentering, and was in fact the principal architect in Izabal, having then on his hands a contract for \$3500 for building the new house of Messrs. Ampudia and Pulleiro. In other

things, I am sorry to say, Philip was not quite so respectable; I can only hope that it was not his American education that led him into some of the irregularities in which he seemed to think there was no harm. He asked me to go to his house and see his wife, but on the way I learned from him that he was not married; he said—and I hope it is a slander upon the good people of Izabal—that he only did as all the rest did. He owned the house in which he lived, and for which, with the ground, he had paid twelve dollars. Being myself a householder and an American, I tried to induce him to take advantage of the opportunity of the padre's visit and set a good example by getting married, but he was obstinate, and said that he did not like to be trammelled, and that he might go elsewhere and see another girl whom he liked better.

While I was standing at his door, Mr. Catherwood passed on his way to visit Mr. Rush, the engineer of the steamboat, who had been ill on board. We found him in one of the huts of the town, in a hammock with all his clothes on. He was a man of Herculean frame, six feet three or four inches tall and stout in proportion, but he lay helpless as a child. A single candle stuck upon the dirt floor gave a miserable light, and a group of men of different races and color, from the white-faced Saxon to the dark-skinned Indian and African, stood round him—rude nurses for one used to the comforts of an English home. I recollected that Izabal was noted as a sickly place; Mr. Montgomery, after his interesting visit to Guatemala in 1838, had told me that even to pass through it was like running the gauntlet for life, and I trembled for the poor stricken Englishman. I remembered, too, and it is strange that I had not done so earlier, that Mr. Shannon, our chargé to Central America, had died here. Philip was with me and knew where Mr. Shannon was buried, but in the dark he could not point out the spot. I intended to set out early in the morning and afraid that, in the hurry of departure, I might neglect altogether the sacred duty of visiting in this distant place the grave of an American, I returned to the house and requested Señor Ampudia to accompany me. We crossed the square, passed through the suburbs, and in a few minutes were outside the town. It was so dark that I

could scarcely see my way. Crossing a deep gulley on a plank, we reached a rising ground, open on the right, stretching away to the Golfo Dulce, and in front bounded by a gloomy forest. On the top beside a rude fence of rough upright poles which enclosed the grave of some relative of Señor Ampudia, was the grave of Mr. Shannon. There was no stone or fence or hardly any elevation to distinguish it from the soil around. It was a gloomy burial place for one of my countrymen, and I felt an involuntary depression of spirit. In fact, a certain sense of fatality hovered over our diplomatic appointment to Central America: Mr. Williams, Mr. Shannon, Mr. De Witt, Mr. Leggett, all who had ever come here in such a capacity, were dead. I thought, too, of what a near relative of Mr. Dewitt had written me: "May you be more fortunate than either of your predecessors has been." It was melancholy that one who had died abroad in the service of his country was thus left on a wild mountain without any stone to mark his grave. I returned to the house, directed a fence to be built around the grave of Mr. Shannon, and my friend the padre promised to plant at its head a cocoanut tree.

At daylight the muleteers commenced loading for the passage of "the Mountain." At seven o'clock the whole caravan, consisting of nearly a hundred mules and twenty or thirty muleteers, was fairly under way. Our immediate party consisted of five mules, two for Mr. Catherwood and myself, one for Augustin, and two for luggage; in addition we had four Indian carriers. If we had been consulted, perhaps at that time we should have scrupled to use men as beasts of burden, but Señor Ampudia had made all the arrangements for us. The Indians were naked except for a small piece of cotton cloth wrapped around the loins and crossed in front between the legs. The loads were arranged so as to have on one side a flat surface. The Indians sat down on the ground with their backs to the loads; each passed a supporting strap across his forehead and adjusted it on his shoulders; then, with the aid of staffs or the hands of bystanders, they rose to their feet as a unit. It seemed cruel, but before

much sympathy could be expended upon them they were out of sight.

At eight o'clock Mr. Catherwood and I mounted, each armed with a brace of pistols and a large hunting knife, which we carried in a belt around the body. Afraid to trust it in other hands, I also had a mountain barometer slung over my shoulder. Augustin carried pistols and a sword. Our principal muleteer, who was mounted, carried a machete and, on his naked heels, a pair of murderous spurs with rowels two inches long; two other muleteers accompanied us on foot, each carrying a gun.

A group of friendly bystanders gave us their adieus and good wishes. After passing the few straggling houses which constituted the suburbs, we entered upon a marshy plain sprinkled with shrubs and small trees and in a few minutes were in an unbroken forest. At every step the mules sank to their fetlocks in mud, and very soon we came to great puddles and mudholes, which reminded me of the breaking-up of winter and the solitary horse-path in one of our primeval forests at home. As we advanced, the shade of the trees became thicker, the holes larger and deeper, and roots, rising two or three feet above the ground, crossed the path in every direction. I gave the barometer to the muleteer, for I had all I could do to keep myself in the saddle. All conversation was at an end, and we kept as close as we could to the track of the muleteer; when he descended into a mudhole and crawled out, the entire legs of his mule blue with mud, we followed and came out as blue as he.

The caravan of mules, which had started before us, was but a short distance ahead, and in a little while we heard ringing through the woods the loud shout of the muleteers and the sharp crack of the whip. We overtook them at the bank of a stream which broke rapidly over a stony bed, its waters darkened by the shade of the overhanging trees. The whole caravan was moving up the bed of the stream. The muleteers, without shirts and with their large trousers rolled up to the thighs and down from the waistband, were scattered among the mules. One was chasing a stray beast; a

second darted toward one whose load was slipping off; a third was lifting up one that had fallen; another, with his foot braced against a mule's side, was straining at the girth—all were shouting, cursing, and lashing, the whole a mass of inextricable confusion.

We drew up to let them pass us. Before joining them, we wished to avoid a bend in the stream by crossing to a road on the opposite bank, which, though level, we found to be fetlock deep in mud. After a short distance on this road, we joined the caravan in the bed of the stream, following it until another road, no better than the first, brought us to the foot of the mountain. The ascent began precipitously and by an extraordinary passage, a narrow gulley worn by the tracks of mules and the washing of mountain torrents. It was so deep that the sides were higher than our heads, and so narrow that we could barely pass through without touching them. Our whole caravan moved singly through this muddy defile. The muleteers scattered among them and on the bank above, extricating the mules as they stuck fast, raising them as they fell, arranging their cargoes, cursing, shouting, and lashing them on; if one stopped, all behind were blocked up, unable to turn. Any sudden start pressed us against the sides of the gulley, and there was no small danger of getting a leg crushed. Emerging from this defile, we came again to deep mudholes and projecting roots of trees, which added to the difficulty of a steep ascent. The trees were large, their roots high and far-extending; above all, the mahogany tree threw out its giant roots, high at the trunk and tapering, not round like the roots of other trees, but straight with sharp edges, traversing rocks and the roots of other trees. It was the last of the rainy season. The heavy rains from which we had suffered at sea had deluged the mountain, and it was in the worst state it could be and still be passable; sometimes it was not passable at all. For the last few days there had been no rain, but we had hardly congratulated ourselves upon our good fortune in having a clear day when the forest became darker and the rain poured. The woods were of impenetrable thickness and we could see nothing beyond the detestable path before us. For five long hours we were dragged through

mudholes, squeezed in gulleys, knocked against trees, and tumbled over roots. Every step required care and great physical exertion and, withal, I felt that our inglorious epitaph might well read: "tossed over the head of a mule, brained by the trunk of a mahogany tree, and buried in the mud of Mico Mountain." We attempted to walk, but the rocks and roots were so slippery, the mudholes so deep, and the ascents and descents so steep, that it was impossible to continue.

The mules were only half loaded, but, even so, several broke down and the lash could not move them; scarcely one passed over the mountain without a fall. Of our immediate party, mine fell first. Finding that I could not save her with the rein, by an exertion that strained every nerve I lifted myself from off her back and flung myself clear of roots and trees (but not of mud) to discover I had escaped an even worse danger: my dagger had fallen from its sheath and was standing upright with the handle in the mud, a foot of naked blade. Then Mr. Catherwood, too, was thrown from his mule with such violence that for a few moments, feeling the helplessness of our condition, I was horror-struck. Long before this he had broken silence to utter an exclamation which seemed to come from the bottom of his heart: "If I had known of this mountain, you might have come to Central America alone!" If I had had any tendency to be a little uplifted by the honors I received at Belize, I was quickly brought down by this highway to my capital. Shortly after, Augustin's mule fell backward; he kicked his feet out of the stirrups and attempted to slide off behind, but the mule rolled and caught him with his left leg under. But for his kicking, I should have thought that every bone in his body was broken, and the mule kicked worse than he. But they rose together and without any damage, except that the mud, which before lay upon them in spots, was now formed into a regular plaster.

We were toiling on toward the top of the mountain, when, at a sudden turn, we met a solitary traveler. He was a tall, dark-complexioned man, with a broad-brimmed Panama hat rolled up at the sides, a striped woolen Guatemala jacket with fringe at the bottom, plaid pantaloons, leather spatter-



dashes, spurs, and sword. He was mounted on a noble mule with a high-peaked saddle, and the butts of a pair of horseman's pistols peeped out of the holsters. His face was covered with sweat and mud, his breast and legs were spattered, and his right side was a complete incrustation; altogether, his appearance was fearful. It seemed strange to meet anyone on such a road and, to our surprise, he accosted us in English. He had set out with muleteers and Indians but, having lost them in some of the windings of the woods, he was now seeking his way alone. He had crossed the mountain twice before, but had never known it to be so bad; he had been thrown twice, once his mule had rolled over him and nearly crushed him, and now she was so frightened that he could hardly urge her along. He dismounted, and the trembling beast and his own exhausted state confirmed all that he had said. He asked us for brandy, wine, or water, anything to revive him, but unfortunately our stores were up ahead and for him to go back even one step was out of the question.

Imagine our surprise when, with his feet buried in the mud, he told us that for two years he had been in Guatemala City "negotiating" for a bank charter. Fresh as I was from the land of banks, I almost thought he intended a fling at me, but he did not look like one in a humor for jesting and, for the benefit of those who will regard it as an evidence of incipient improvement, I am able to state that he already had the charter secured when he rolled over in the mud and was then on his way to England to sell the stock. He told us, too, what seemed in better keeping with the scene, that Carrera had marched toward San Salvador and that a battle was daily expected between him and Morazán.

But neither of us had time to lose, and parting, though with some reluctance, almost as abruptly as we had met, we continued our ascent. At one o'clock, to our inexpressible satisfaction, we reached the top of the mountain. Here we found a clearing about two hundred feet in diameter, made for the benefit of benighted muleteers; in various places were heaps of ashes and burned stumps of wood, the remains of their fires. It was the only place on the mountain which

the sun could reach, and here the ground was dry. The view, however, was bounded by the clearing.

We dismounted, and would have lunched if we had had any water to drink; after a few minutes' rest we resumed our journey. The descent was as bad as the ascent; instead of stopping to let the mules breathe as they had done in ascending, the muleteers seemed anxious to determine in how short a time they could tumble them down the mountain. In one of the muddiest defiles, shut up by the falling of a mule in front of us and the crowding upon us of all behind, we stopped at the first convenient place to let the whole caravan pass. The carefulness of the mules was extraordinary. For an hour I watched the movements of the one ahead of me. At times he put one of his forefeet on a root or stone and tried it as a man would; sometimes he drew his forelegs out of a bed of mud from the shoulders, and sometimes it was one continued alternation of sinking and pulling out.

This was the great highroad to the city of Guatemala, which has always been a place of distinction in Spanish America; almost all the travel and merchandise from Europe passes over it. Our guide said that the reason it was in such bad condition was because it was traversed by so many mules. In some countries this would be a good reason for improving it, but it was pleasant to find that the people here to whom I was accredited were relieved from one of the sources of contention at home, since they did not trouble themselves with the complicated questions attendant upon internal improvements.<sup>6</sup>

In two hours we reached a wild river or mountain torrent, foaming and breaking over its rocky bed, and shaded by large trees. It was called *El Arroyo del Muerto*, or Stream of the Dead. The muleteers were already distributed on the

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6. Stephens noted that for the improvement of the road the Constituent Assembly of Guatemala had imposed a tax of one dollar upon every bale of merchandise that passed over the mountain. A railroad now carries much of the freight from the Atlantic Coast to Guatemala City.

rocks or under the shade of the trees, eating their frugal meal of corncakes; the mules were in the river or scattered along the bank. We selected a spot under a large tree, which spread its branches over us like a roof, and which was so near the stream that we could dip our drinking cups into the water.

All the anxiety which during the day I had been able to spare from myself I bestowed upon my barometer. The guide who carried it on his back also carried on the belt of his machete a small white pitcher with a red rim, of which he was very proud and very careful. Several times, after a stumble and a narrow escape, he turned round and held up the pitcher with a smile, which gave me hopes for the barometer. In fact, he had carried the barometer through without its being broken, although, unfortunately, all the quicksilver, which was not well secured, had escaped. It was impossible to repair it in Guatemala, and its loss was a source of regret during our whole journey, for we ascended many mountains, the heights of which had never been ascertained.

But we had another misadventure, which, at the moment, touched us more nearly. We sat on the ground Turkish fashion with a vacant space between us, and Augustin placed before us a well-filled napkin. As we dipped water from the clear stream by our side, a spirit of other days came over us, and we spoke in contempt of railroads, cities, and hotels. But O Publicans, you were avenged! We unrolled the napkin, and the scene that presented itself was too shocking even for the strongest nerves. We had provided bread for three days, eggs boiled hard, and two roasted fowls for as long as they might last. Augustin had forgotten salt, but he had placed in the napkin a large paper of gunpowder as an adventure of his own. The paper was broken, and the bread, fowls, and eggs were thoroughly seasoned with this new condiment. All the beauty of the scene, all our equanimity, everything except our tremendous appetites, left us in a moment. As the vision of country taverns rose before us, we who had been so amiable abused Augustin and wished him the whole murderous seasoning in his own body. We picked

and made excavations for our immediate use, but most of our stores were lost and there was not enough to satisfy hunger. Perhaps it was the most innocent way of tasting gunpowder, but even so it was a bitter pill.

This over, we mounted and, fording the stream, continued our descent. Passing off by a spur of the mountain, we came out upon an open ridge which commanded a view of an extensive savannah. Very soon we reached a fine table of land where a large party of muleteers on their way to Izabal were encamped for the night, their fires for cooking supper already burning. Bales of indigo, which formed their cargoes, were piled up like a wall; nearby the mules were pasturing quietly. It was a great satisfaction to be once more in the open country, and to see the mountain, with its dense forest, lighted up by the setting sun, grand and gloomy, and ourselves fairly out of it. With ten hours of the hardest riding I ever went through, we had made only twelve miles.

Descending from this table, we entered a thickly wooded plain and in a few minutes reached a grove of wild palm trees of singular beauty. From the top of a tall naked stem grew branches twenty or thirty feet long, spreading from the trunk and falling outward with a graceful bend, like enormous plumes of feathers. The trees stood so close that the bending branches met to form arches, in some places as regular as if constructed by an artist. As we rode among them there was a solemn stillness, an air of desolation, that reminded us of the columns of an Egyptian temple.

Toward dark we reached the rancho of Mico. It was a small house, built of poles and plastered with mud. Near it and connected by a shed thatched with branches was a larger house, built of the same material and expressly for the use of travelers. This was already occupied by two parties from Guatemala City, one of which consisted of the Canónigo Castillo, his clerical companion or secretary, and two young Pavons. The other was a French merchant on his way to Paris. Mr. Catherwood and I were picturesque-looking objects, not spattered but plastered with mud from head to foot, but we soon became known, and received from the whole company a cordial welcome to Central America.

Their appearance was such as to give me a highly favorable opinion of the kind of people I could expect to meet at Guatemala City. The *canónigo* was one of the first men in the country in position and character, and was then on his way to Havana on a delicate political mission, having been sent by the Constituent Assembly to invite back the archbishop banished by General Morazán ten years before. He undertook to do the honors, and set before us chocolate and what he called the "national dish," *frijoles*, or fried black beans, which, fortunately for our subsequent travels, we "cottoned to" at once. We were very tired, but agreeable company was better than sleep. The *canónigo* had been educated at Rome and had passed the early part of his life in Europe; the Frenchman was from Paris; the young Pavons had been educated in New York. We sat till a late hour, our clothes stiff with mud, talking of France, Italy, and home. At length we hung up our hammocks. We had been so much occupied that we had paid no attention to our luggage, and now, wanting a change of raiment, we could not find our men and were obliged to turn in as we were. However, with the satisfactory feeling that we had passed "the mountain," we soon fell asleep.

## Chapter III

*A canónigo. How to roast a fowl. Extempore shoemaking. Motagua River. Beautiful scene. Crossing the river. The luxury of water. Primitive costumes. How to make tortillas. Costly timber. Gualán. Oppressive heat. Shock of an earthquake. A stroll through the town. A troublesome muleteer. A lawsuit. Important negotiations. A modern Bona Dea. How to gain a husband. A kingdom of flora. Zacapa. Making free with a host.*

BEFORE daylight I was out of doors. Twenty or thirty men, muleteers and servants, were asleep on the ground, each lying on his back with his black *chamarra* wound round him and covering his head and feet. As the day broke they arose. Very soon the Frenchman, too, got up, took chocolate, and after an hour's preparation started his journey. The canónigo set off next. He had crossed the mountain twenty years before on his first arrival in the country and still retained a full recollection of its horrors. He set off on the back of an Indian, in a *silla*, a chair with a high back and top to protect him from the sun. Three other Indians followed as relay carriers, and a noble mule for his relief if he should become tired of the chair. The Indian was bent almost double, but the canónigo was in high spirits, smoking his cigar and waving his hand till he was out of sight. The Pavons started last, and we were left alone.

Still none of our men came. At about eight o'clock two made their appearance; they had slept at a rancho near by, and the others had gone on with the luggage. We were excessively provoked but, enduring as best we could the discomfort of our clothes stiff with mud, we saddled and set off.

We saw no more of our caravan of mules, and our muleteer of the barometer had disappeared without notice, leaving us in the hands of two understrappers.

Our road lay over a mountainous country, but one generally clear of wood. In about two hours we reached a collection of ranchos, called El Pozo. One of our men rode up to a hut and dismounted as if he were at home. When the woman of the house chided him for not having come the night before, he gruffly ascribed the cause to us, and it was evident that we stood a chance of losing him too. But in the desire for breakfast we had a subject of more immediate interest. Our tea and coffee, all that we had left after the destruction of our stores by gunpowder, had gone forward, and it would be some time before we would be able to get them. And here, in the beginning of our journey, we found a scarcity of provender greater than we had ever met with before in any inhabited country. The people lived exclusively upon tortillas—flat cakes made of crushed Indian corn and baked on a clay griddle—and black beans. Augustin bought some of the latter, but they required several hours' soaking before they could be eaten. At length he succeeded in buying a fowl and, running a stick through it, smoked it over a fire without dressing of any kind. With tortillas, it made a good meal for a penitentiary system of diet. As we had expected, our principal muleteer found it impossible to tear himself away; but, like a dutiful husband, he sent, by the only one of our men now left us, a loving message to his wife at Gualán.

At the moment of starting our remaining attendant said he could not go until he had made a pair of shoes, and we were obliged to wait; but it did not take long. Standing on an untanned cowhide, he marked the size of his feet with a piece of coal, cut the shapes out with his machete, made proper holes, and, passing a leather string under the instep, around the heel, and between the great *doigt du pied* and the one next to it, was shod.

Again our road lay on the ridge of a high mountain, with a valley on each side. At a distance were beautiful green hillsides, ornamented with pine trees and grazing cattle, that reminded us of park scenery in England. Often points of land presented themselves which at home would have been

selected as sites for dwellings and embellished by art and taste. It was a land of perpetual summer—the blasts of winter never reach it—but, with all its softness and beauty, it was dreary and desolate.

At two o'clock it began to rain, but in an hour it cleared off. From the high mountain ridge we saw the Motagua River, one of the noblest in Central America, rolling majestically through the valley on our left. Descending by a wild, precipitous path, at four o'clock we reached the bank directly opposite Encuentros.<sup>1</sup> It was one of the most beautiful scenes I ever beheld: all around were giant mountains, and the river, broad and deep, rolled through them with the force of a mighty torrent.

On the opposite bank were a few houses, and two or three canoes lay in the water, but not a person was in sight. By loud shouting we brought a man to the bank who entered one of the canoes and set it adrift. He was immediately carried far down the stream, but, taking advantage of an eddy, he brought her across to the place where we stood. Our luggage, the saddles, bridles, and other trappings of the mules were put on board, and we embarked. Augustin sat in the stern holding the halter of one of the mules and leading her like a decoy duck, but the rest had no disposition to follow. The muleteer drove them in up to their necks, but they ran back to the shore. Several times, by pelting them with sticks and stones, he drove them in as before. At length he stripped himself and, wading to the depth of his breast with a stick ten or twelve feet long, succeeded in getting them all afloat, and on a line within the reach of his stick. In the event that one of them turned toward the shore, he received a blow on his nose. At last they all set their faces for the opposite bank, their little heads being all that we could see, aimed directly across but carried down by the current. When one who had been carried below the rest saw her companions landing, she raised a frightened cry and almost drowned herself in her struggle to reach them.

During all this time we sat in the canoe with the hot sun beating upon our heads. For the last two hours we had suf-

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1. At present no such village exists on the lower Motagua.



ferred excessively from heat. Our clothes were saturated with perspiration and stiff with mud, and we looked forward almost with rapture to a bath in the Motagua and a change of linen. We landed and walked up to the house in which we were to pass the night. It was plastered and whitewashed, and adorned with streaks of red in the shape of festoons; in front was a fence made of long reeds, six inches in diameter, split into two. Altogether the appearance was favorable. To our great vexation, our luggage had gone on to a rancho three leagues beyond and our muleteers refused to go any farther. We were unpleasantly situated, but we did not care to leave the Motagua River so soon. Our host told us that his house and all that he had were at our disposal. But he could give us nothing to eat and, telling Augustin to ransack the village, we returned to the river. Everywhere the current was too rapid for a quiet bath. Calling our canoe man, we returned to the opposite side, and in a few minutes were enjoying an ablution, the luxury of which can only be appreciated by those who, like us, had crossed Mico Mountain without throwing away their clothes.

There was an enjoyment in this bath greater even than that of cooling our heated bodies, for it was the moment of a golden sunset. At the margin of a channel along which the stream was rushing with arrow-like speed, we stood up to our necks in water clear as crystal and as calm as that of some diminutive lake. On each side were mountains several thousand feet high, whose tops were illuminated by the setting sun. On a point above us was a palm-leafed hut, and before it a naked Indian sat looking at us, as flocks of parrots, with brilliant plumage, almost in thousands, flew over our heads, catching up our words, and filling the air with noisy mockings. It was one of those beautiful scenes that so rarely occur in human life, almost realizing dreams. Old as we were, we might have become poetic had not Augustin come down to the opposite bank and, with a cry that rose above the chattering of parrots and the loud murmur of the river, called us to supper.

We had one moment of agony when we returned to our clothes. They lay extended upon the bank, emblems of men

who had seen better days. The setting sun, which shed over all a soft and mellow luster, laid bare the seams of mud and dirt, and made them hideous. We had but one alternative, and that was to go on without them. But, as this seemed to be trenching upon the proprieties of life, we picked them up and put them on reluctantly. I am not sure, however, but that we made an unnecessary sacrifice of personal comfort. The proprieties of life are after all only matters of conventional usage. When we presented our letter, our host, a don, received us with great dignity in a single garment, loose, white, and very laconic, not quite reaching his knees. The dress of his wife was no less easy, being somewhat in the style of the old-fashioned shortgown and petticoat, except that the shortgown and whatever else is usually worn under it were wanting and their place supplied by a string of beads with a large cross at the end. A dozen men and half-grown boys, naked except for the small covering formed by rolling the trousers up and down in the manner I have mentioned, were lounging about the house, as were women and girls in such extremes of undress that a string of beads seemed quite a modest covering.

Mr. Catherwood and I were in a rather awkward predicament for the night. The general reception room contained three beds made of strips of cowhide interlaced. The don occupied one; he had not much undressing to do, but what little he had, he did by pulling off his shirt. Another bed was at the foot of my hammock. I had been dozing, when I opened my eyes and saw a girl about seventeen sitting sideways upon it, smoking a cigar. She had a piece of striped cotton cloth tied around her waist and falling below her knees. The rest of her dress was that which Nature bestows alike upon the belle of fashionable life and the poorest girl; in other words, it was the same as that of the don's wife, with the exception of the string of beads. At first I thought it was something I had conjured up in a dream. As I waked up perhaps I raised my head, for she gave a few puffs of her cigar, drew a cotton sheet over her head and shoulders, and lay down to sleep. I endeavored to do the same, recalling the proverb that "traveling makes strange bedfellows." I had slept pell-mell

with Greeks, Turks, and Arabs. Now I was beginning a journey in a new country and I felt it my duty to conform to the customs of the people, to be prepared for the worst, and to submit with resignation to whatever might befall me.

As guests, it was pleasant to feel that the family made no strangers of us. Several times during the night we were wakened by the clicking of flint and steel, and saw one of our neighbors lighting a cigar. At daylight the wife of the don, who had retired with no more ceremony than the others, was enjoying her morning slumber. While I was dressing she bade me good morning, removed the cotton covering from her shoulders, and arose dressed for the day.

We departed early, and for some distance our road lay along the banks of the Motagua, almost as beautiful by morning as by evening light. In an hour we began to ascend the spur of a mountain. Reaching the top, we followed a high and narrow ridge which commanded on both sides an almost boundless view, and seemed selected for picturesque effect. The scenery was grand, but the land was wild and uncultivated, without fences, enclosures, or habitation. A few cattle were wandering wild over the great expanse but without imparting that domestic aspect which in other countries attends the presence of cattle. We met a few Indians who with their machetes were going to their morning's work, and a man who was riding a mule, with a woman before him, his arm encircling her waist.

I was riding ahead of my companions, and on the summit of the ridge, a little aside from the road, I saw a little white girl, perfectly naked, playing before a rancho. As most of the people we had met were Indians or Ladinos, I was attracted by her appearance and rode up to the rancho. The proprietor, in the easy costume of our host of Encuentros, was swinging in a hammock under the portico smoking a cigar. At a little distance was a shed thatched with stalks and leaves of Indian corn called the *cocina*, or kitchen. As usual, while the don was lolling in his hammock, the women were at work.

I rode on to the *cocina* and dismounted. The party consisted of the mother and a pretty daughter-in-law of about

nineteen, and two daughters of about fifteen and seventeen. In honor of my visit, the mother snatched up the little girl who had attracted me to the rancho, carried her inside, and slipped over her head a garment which, I believe, is generally worn by little girls; but in a few minutes my young friend disencumbered herself of her finery and was toddling about with it under her arm.

The whole family was engaged in making tortillas. This is the bread of Central and of all Spanish America and the only kind to be found except in the principal towns. At one end of the *cocina* was an elevation on which stood a *comal*, or griddle, resting on three stones with a fire blazing under it. The daughter-in-law had before her an earthen vessel containing Indian corn which had been soaked in limewater to remove the husk. Placing a handful on an oblong stone curving inward, she mashed it with a stone roller into a thick paste. The girls took it as it was mashed, patted it with their hands into flat cakes, and laid them on the griddle to bake. This is repeated for every meal, and a great part of the work of the women consists in making tortillas.

By the time Mr. Catherwood arrived the tortillas were smoking, and we stopped to breakfast. They gave us the only luxury they had, coffee made of parched corn, which, in compliment to their kindness, we drank. Like me, Mr. Catherwood was struck with the personal beauty of this family group. With the advantages of dress and education they might well have become ornaments in cultivated society; but it has been decreed otherwise, and these young girls will go through life making tortillas.

For another hour we continued on the ridge of the mountain and then entered a more woody country. Half an hour later we came to a large gate, which stood directly across the road like a toll bar, the first token we had seen of individual or territorial boundary. In other countries it would have formed a fitting entrance to a princely estate, for the massive frame, with all its posts and supporters, was of solid mahogany. The heat was now intense. We entered a thick wood and forded a wild stream, across which pigs were swimming. Soon after we came to a cochineal plantation and passed

through a long lane thickly bordered and overshadowed with shrubs and trees, close to suffocation. We emerged into an open plain on which the sun beat with almost intolerable power; crossing the plain, at about three o'clock we entered Gualán. There was not a breath of air; the houses and the earth seemed to throw out heat. I was confused, my head swam, and I felt in danger of sunstroke. At that moment there was a slight shock of earthquake. I was unconscious of it, but was almost overpowered by the excessive heat and closeness of atmosphere which accompanied it.

We rode up to the house of Doña Bartola to whom we had a letter of recommendation, and I cannot describe the satisfaction with which I threw myself into a hammock. Shade and quiet restored me. For the first time since we left Izabal we changed our clothes; for the first time, too, we dined.

Toward evening we strolled through the town. It stood on a table of breccia rock at the junction of two noble rivers, and was encircled by a belt of mountains. Its population of about ten thousand was chiefly mestizos. One principal street, the houses of one story with piazzas in front, terminated in a plaza or public square. At the head of the square stood a large church with a Gothic door, before which, at a distance of ten or twelve yards, was a cross about twenty feet high. Leaving the plaza, we walked down to the Motagua. On the bank a boat about fifty feet long and ten wide was in the process of construction and it was being made entirely of mahogany. Near it a party of men and women were fording the stream, carrying their clothes above their heads; around a point three women were bathing. There were no ancient associations connected with this place, but the wildness of the scene, the clouds, the tints of the sky, and the setting sun reflected upon the mountains, were beautiful. At dark we returned to the house. Except for the companionship of some thousands of ants, which blackened the candles and covered everything perishable, we had a room to ourselves.

Early in the morning we were served with chocolate and a small roll of sweet bread. While at breakfast our muleteer came, reiterating a demand for settlement, and claiming that

an additional three dollars were due him. We refused to pay him, and he went away furious. Within half an hour an alguacil<sup>2</sup> came to me with a summons to the alcalde.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Catherwood, who was at the moment cleaning his pistols, cheered me by threatening to bombard the town if they put me in prison. The cabildo, or town hall, was at one side of the plaza. We entered a large room, one end of which was partitioned off by a wooden railing. Inside sat the alcalde and his clerk, and outside was the muleteer with a group of half-naked fellows as his backers. He had reduced his claim to one dollar, doubtless supposing that I would pay that rather than have any trouble. It was not very respectable to be sued for a dollar, but when I looked into his face on entering, I resolved not to pay a cent. I did not, however, claim my privilege under the law of nations, but defended the action on its merits. The alcalde decided in my favor and then when I showed him my passport, he asked me inside the bar and offered me a cigar.

This over, I had more important business to attend to. I had to hire mules, which I found could not be procured until two days later. Next I negotiated for having some clothes washed, which was a complicated business, for it was necessary to specify which articles were to be washed, which ironed, and which starched, and to pay separately for washing, ironing, soap, and starch. Lastly, I negotiated with a tailor for a pair of pantaloons, purchasing separately stuff, lining, buttons, and thread, the tailor finding needles and thimble himself.

Toward evening we again walked to the river, and on our return taught Doña Bartola how to make tea. By this time the whole town was in a commotion in anticipation of the great ceremony of praying to Santa Lucía. Early in the morning, the firing of muskets, petards, and rockets had announced the arrival of this unexpected but welcome visitor, one of the holiest saints of the calendar, and, next to San Antonio, the most celebrated for the power of working

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2. Policeman.

3. Mayor.

miracles. Morazán's rise to power had been signalized by a persecution of the clergy: his friends said that it was the purification of a corrupt body; his enemies, that it was a war against morality and religion. The country was at that time overrun with priests, friars, and monks of various orders. Everywhere the largest buildings, the best-cultivated lands, and a great portion of the wealth of the country were in their hands. Many, no doubt, were good men, but some used their sacred robes as a cloak for rascality and vice, and most were drones, reaping where they did not sow and living luxuriously by the sweat of other men's brows. At all events, and whatever the cause, the early part of Morazán's administration was signalized by hostility to the clergy as a class. From the Archbishop of Guatemala down to the poorest friar, they were in danger; some fled, others were banished, and many were torn by rude soldiers from their convents and churches, hurried to the seaports, and shipped to Cuba and old Spain under sentence of death if they returned. The country was left comparatively destitute. Many of the churches fell to ruins; others stood, but their doors were seldom opened and the practice and memory of their religious rites were fading away. Carrera and his Indians, with the mystic rites of Catholicism ingrafted upon the superstitions of their fathers, had acquired a strong hold upon the feelings of the people by endeavoring to bring back the exiled clergy and to restore the influence of the church. The tour of Santa Lucía was regarded as an indication of a change of feeling and government, and as a prelude to the restoration of the influence of the church and the revival of ceremonies dear to the heart of the Indian. As such, it had been hailed by all the villages through which she had passed, and that night she would receive the prayers of the Christians of Gualán.

Santa Lucía enjoyed a peculiar popularity because of her miraculous power over the affections of the young. Any young man who prayed to her for a wife, or any young woman who prayed for a husband, was sure to receive the object of such prayer; and if the person praying indicated to the saint the individual wished for, the prayer would be granted, provided such individual was not already married.

It was not surprising that a saint with such extraordinary powers, touching so directly the tenderest sensibilities, should create such a sensation in a place where the feelings, or, rather, the passions, are particularly turned to love.

Doña Bartola invited us to go with her to call upon a friend of hers; during the whole visit, a servant girl sat with her lap full of tobacco, making straw cigars for immediate use. It was the first time we had smoked with ladies and, at first, it was rather awkward to ask one for a light; but we were so thoroughly broken in that night that we never felt any delicacy about it afterward. The conversation turned upon the saint and her miraculous powers. When we avowed ourselves somewhat skeptical, the servant girl, with that familiarity—though not want of respect—which exists throughout Central America, said that it was wicked to doubt, that she had prayed to the saint herself and two months afterward had been married to the very man she prayed for, though at the time he had had no idea of her, in fact, had wanted another girl.

With this encouragement, we locked the house and, accompanied by children and servants, set out to pay our homage to the saint. The sound of a violin and the fringing of rockets indicated the direction of her temporary domicile. She had taken up her residence in the hut of a poor Indian in the suburbs. For some time before reaching the hut, we encountered crowds of both sexes, of all ages and colors, and in every degree of dress and undress, smoking and talking, and sitting or lying on the ground in every variety of attitude. Room was made for our party, and we entered the hut.

It was about twenty feet square, thatched on the top and sides with leaves of Indian corn, and filled with a dense mass of kneeling men and women. On one side was an altar, about four feet high, covered with a clean white cotton cloth. On the top of the altar was a frame, with three elevations, like a flower stand, and on the top of that a case containing a large wax doll, dressed in blue silk and ornamented with gold leaf, spangles, and artificial flowers. This was Santa Lucía. Over her head was a canopy of red cotton cloth on which was emblazoned a cross in gold. On the right was a



sedan chair, the traveling equipage of the saint, trimmed with red cotton and gold leaf, with festoons of oranges hung from the roof, and rough posts enwrapped with leaves of sugar cane; near it were the Indians in half sacerdotal dress on whose shoulders she traveled. At the foot of the altar was a mat, on which girls and boys were playing; and a little fellow about six years old, habited in the picturesque costume of a straw hat—and that only—was coolly surveying the crowd.

The ceremony of praying had already begun, and the music of a drum, a violin, and a flageolet, under the direction of the Indian master of ceremonies, drowned the noise of voices. Doña Bartola, who was a widow, and the other ladies of our party fell on their knees. Recommending myself to their prayers, I looked on without doing anything for myself, but I studied attentively the faces of those around me. There were some of both sexes who could not strictly be called young, but they did not, on that account, pray less earnestly. In some places the imputation of being desirous to procure husband or wife would be repellent to the people, but not so in Gualán: they prayed publicly for what they considered a blessing. Some of the men were so much in earnest that perspiration stood in large drops upon their faces; and none thought that praying for a husband need tinge the cheek of a modest maiden. I watched the countenance of a young Indian girl, beaming with enthusiasm and hope; while her eyes rested upon the image of the saint and her lips moved in prayer, I could not but imagine that her heart was full of some truant, and perhaps unworthy, lover.

Outside the hut the scene was entirely different. Near by were rows of kneeling men and women, but beyond were wild groups of half-naked men and boys, setting off rockets and fireworks. As I moved through the throng, a flash rose from under my feet, and a petard exploded so near that the powder singed me; turning round, I saw hurrying away my rascally muleteer. Beyond were parties of young men and women dancing by the light of blazing pine sticks. In a hut at some little distance were two haggard old women, who were stirring up large caldrons over blazing fires and serving

out the contents with long wooden ladles, like witches dealing out poison instead of love potions.

At ten o'clock the prayers to the saint died away, the crowd separated into groups and couples, and many fell into what in English would be called flirtations. A mat was spread for our party against the side of a hut, and we all lighted cigars and sat down upon it. Cups made of small gourds and filled from the caldrons with a preparation of boiled Indian corn sweetened with various *dulces* were passed from mouth to mouth, each one taking a sip and passing it on to the next; this continued, without any interruption, for more than an hour. Although we remained on the ground till after midnight, we were, nevertheless, among the first to leave. On the whole, we concluded that praying to Santa Lucía must lead to matrimony. I could not but remark, however, that in the matter of getting husbands and wives, most seemed disposed to do something for themselves and not leave all to the grace of the saint.

The next day it was excessively hot, and we remained within doors. In the evening we visited the padre, who had just returned from a neighboring village. He was a short, fat man, dressed in a white nightcap, a blue striped jacket, and white pantaloons, and we found him swinging in a hammock and smoking a cigar. He had a large household of women and children, but as to the relation in which each stood to him, people differed. He gave us more information about the country than we had yet been able to obtain, and particularly about Copán, a ruined city which we wished to visit. He was familiar with the history of the Indians, and understood thoroughly the character of the present race. In answer to our question if they were all Christians, he said that they were devout and religious, and had a great respect for the priests and saints. With this he hitched up his bursting pantaloons, and lighted another cigar. We might have smiled at the idea of his confounding his comfortable figure with the saints, but he had so much good sense and good feeling that we were not disposed to be captious.

The next morning our muleteer came, but through some misunderstanding he did not bring enough mules to carry all our luggage. Rather than wait any longer we started with-

out him, leaving part of the baggage for him to bring on to Zacapa the next day.

To the right of us as we left Gualán, was the Motagua River, now become to us a friend. Beyond the river was the great range of the mountains of Verapaz, six or eight thousand feet high, which an hour later we began to ascend. Soon we were in a wilderness of flowers. Shrubs and bushes were clothed in purple and red and, on the sides of the mountain and in the ravines leading down to the river, in the wildest positions, were large trees so covered with red that they seemed a single flower. In three hours we descended from our mountain height, and came once more to the river side, where it was rolling swiftly, and in some places breaking into rapids. After following the river for about an hour, we again ascended several thousand feet. At two o'clock we reached the village of San Pablo, situated on a lofty table of land, looking down upon the river and having its view bounded by the mountains of Verapaz. The church stood at the entrance of the village and after turning our mules loose to graze we ate our meal on its porch. It was a beautiful location, and two waterfalls, shining like streaks of silver on the distant mountain side, reminded us of cascades in Switzerland.

We procured a guide from the alcalde to conduct us to Zacapa and, for two hours after resuming our journey, we had the same great range upon our right. The sun was obscured, but occasionally it broke through and lighted up the sides of the mountains, although the tops were covered with clouds. At four o'clock we had a distant view of the great plain of Zacapa, bounded on the opposite side by a triangular belt of mountains at the foot of which stood the town. We descended and crossed the plain, which was green and well cultivated; fording a stream, we ascended a rugged bank and entered the town.

It was by far the finest we had seen. The streets were regular, and the houses plastered and whitewashed, with large balconied windows and piazzas. The church was two hundred and fifty feet long, with walls ten feet thick and a façade rich with Moorish devices. It was built in the form

of a Latin cross. In one end of the cross was a tailor's shop; the other end was roofless. At one corner was a belfry, consisting of four rough trunks of trees supporting a peaked roof covered with tiles. Two bells were suspended from a rude beam; as we passed, a half-naked Indian was standing on a platform underneath, ringing for vespers.

We rode up to the house of Don Mariano Durante, one of the largest and best in the place, having about a hundred-foot front and a corridor, extending the whole length, paved with square stones. The door was opened by a respectable-looking Santo Domingo negro who told us, in French, that Señor Durante was not at home, but that the house was at our service. Going around to a porte-cochère alongside, he admitted us into a large courtyard ornamented with trees and flowers, at one side of which was a *caballeriza*, or stable. We left our mules in the hands of the servants and entered a *sala*, or reception room, covering nearly the whole front, with large windows reaching down to the floor and iron balconies, and furnished with tables, a European bureau, and chairs. In the center of the room and in the windows hung cages, handsomely made and gilded, containing beautiful singing birds of the country, and two fine canary birds from Havana. This was the residence of two bachelor brothers, who, feeling for the wants of travelers in a country entirely destitute of hotels, kept a door always open for their accommodation. We had candles lighted and made ourselves at home. I was sitting at a table writing when we heard the tramp of mules outside, and a gentleman entered, took off his sword and spurs, and laid his pistols upon the table. Supposing him to be a traveler like ourselves, we asked him to take a seat, and when supper was served, invited him to join us. It was not till bedtime that we discovered that we were doing the honors of the house to one of its masters. He must have thought us cool, but I flatter myself he had no reason to complain of any want of attention.

## Chapter IV

*Purchasing a bridle. A school and its regulations. Conversation with an Indian. Spanish translation of The Spy. Chiquimula. A church in ruins. A veteran of The French Empire. San Esteban. A land of mountains. An affair with a muleteer. A deserted village. A rude assault. Arrest. Imprisonment. Release.*

THE next day we were obliged to wait for our muleteer. Our guide of the night before had stolen one of our bridles and, in trying to replace it, we began to experience an annoyance which was to attend us throughout Central America, that is, the difficulty of buying anything ready-made. We found a blacksmith who had a bit partly made, but he did not have charcoal enough to finish it. Fortunately, during the day an Indian arrived with a backload of the fuel and the bridle was completed. The headstall we bought of a saddler, and the reins, which were of platted leather like the lash of a whip, we were lucky enough to obtain ready-made. The arrival of the charcoal also enabled the blacksmith to fit us out with one pair of spurs.

At Zacapa, for the first time, we saw a schoolhouse, a respectable-looking building with columns in front. Against the wall hung a large card which was headed:

1<sup>st</sup> Decurion <sup>1</sup>

2<sup>nd</sup> Decurion

MONITOR, *etc.*

"Interior regulation for the good government of the school of first letters of this town, which ought to be observed strictly by all the boys composing it . . ."

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1. "A student who has the care of ten other students."

with a long list of complicated Articles enumerating rewards and punishments. The school, for the government of which these regulations were intended, consisted of five boys, the two decurions, the monitor, and two others. It was nearly noon, and the master, who was also the clerk of the alcalde, had not yet made his appearance. The only books I saw were a Catholic prayer book and a translation of Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*. The boys were fine little fellows, half white. With one of them I had a trial of sums in addition, and then of exercises in handwriting, in which he showed himself very proficient, writing "Give me sixpence" in Spanish in a hand which I could not mistake.

We were rather at a loss as to what to do with ourselves, but in the afternoon our host called in an Indian for the purpose of enabling us to make a vocabulary of Indian words. I asked him first to tell me the Indian expression for "name of God," to which he answered, *Santísima Trinidad*. Through our host I explained to him that it was the Indian not the Spanish name that I wanted, but he answered as before, *Santísima Trinidad*, or *Dios*. Although I shaped my question in a variety of ways, I could get no other answer. He was of a tribe called Chinaute,<sup>2</sup> and it might be inferred either that they had never known any Great Spirit who governed and directed the universe, or that they had undergone such an entire change in matters of religion that they had lost their own appellation for the Deity.

In the evening the town was thrown into excitement by the entry of a detachment of Carrera's soldiers on their way to Izabal to receive and escort a purchase of muskets. The house of our friend was a gathering place for residents of the town and, as usual, the conversation turned to the revolutionary state of the country. Some of them, as soon as they knew my official character, were anxious for me to go directly to San Salvador, the headquarters of the Morazán or Federal Party, and assured me that the road to Guatemala City was occupied by the troops of Carrera, and dangerous to

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2. Probably a misspelling of Chinautla, which is now the name of a village in the State of Guatemala.

travel over. I was too well aware of the effect of party spirit to put implicit faith in what partisans told me, and endeavored to change the subject. Our host asked me whether we had any wars in my country, and said he knew that we had had one revolution, for he had read *La Historia de la Revolución de los Estados Unidos del Norte*, in four volumes, in which General Washington appeared under the name of Harper, and Jack Lawton and Dr. Sitgreaves were two of the principal characters; I am sure that my readers will be as surprised as I to learn that in the Spanish translation the tale of *The Spy* is called a history of the American Revolution.

Our muleteer did not make his appearance till late the next day. In the meantime, I had had an opportunity to acquire considerable information about the roads and the state of the country. I became satisfied that as far as the purpose of my mission was concerned, it was not necessary to proceed immediately to Guatemala City, that, in fact, it would be better to delay a little while and see the result of the convulsions that then distracted the country. We decided, therefore, to visit Copán, a city completely out of the usual line of travel. Though only a few days' journey distant, it was in a region of country but little known even at Zacapa. However, our muleteer said that he knew the road. We made a contract with him to conduct us thither in three days, arranging the various stages beforehand, and from Copán to take us directly to Guatemala.

At seven o'clock the next morning we started. Although both my companion and myself were old travelers, our luggage was not packed well for traveling with mules over a mountainous country; our packages were difficult to load and fell off easily. Another traveling difficulty lay in the fact that we had but one pair of spurs between us. Within an hour we forded the Motagua, at this point still a broad stream, deep, and with a rapid current; the wet feet and legs with which we emerged from the stream diminished somewhat the regret with which we bade farewell for a while to the beautiful river. For an hour longer we continued on the plain of Zacapa, cultivated for corn and

cochineal, and divided by fences of brush and cactus. Beyond this the country became broken, arid, and barren, and very soon we began the ascent of a steep mountain.

Two hours later we reached the top, three or four thousand feet high, from which looking back, we had a fine view of the plain and town of Zacapa. Crossing the ridge, we reached a bold precipitous spur, and very soon saw before us another extensive plain, and, afar off, the town of Chiquimula with its giant church. On each side of the ridge were immense ravines with the opposite heights covered with pale and rose-colored mimosa. We descended by a long and zig-zag path to the plain, on which were growing corn, cochineal, and plantain. Once more fording a stream, we ascended a bank, and at two o'clock entered Chiquimula, the capital of the department of that name.

In the center of the plaza was a fine fountain shaded by palm trees, at which women were filling their water jars, and on the sides were the church and cabildo. On one corner was a house to which we were attracted by the appearance of a woman at the door—I may call her a lady, for she wore a frock not open behind, and shoes and stockings. She had a face of uncommon interest, dark, with finely penciled eyebrows. Her gracious welcome to her house heightened the effect of her appearance, and in a few minutes the shed was lumbered with our multifarious luggage.

After a slight lunch we took our guns and, walking down to the edge of the table of land, saw that the gigantic church which had attracted our attention from the top of the mountain was in ruins. With a frontage of seventy-five feet it was two hundred and fifty feet deep, with walls ten feet thick. The façade was adorned with ornaments and figures of the saints, larger than life. The roof had fallen, and inside were huge masses of stone and mortar and a thick growth of trees. Built by the Spaniards on the site of an old Indian village, after twice being shattered by earthquakes both the church and the village were abandoned and the new town built where it now stands. The site of the ruined village was now a campo santo, or burial place; inside the church were the graves of the principal inhabitants and in the niches of the



wall were the bones of priests and monks, identified by names. Outside were the graves of the common people, untended and uncared for; on the top of each grave, only slightly covered with earth, lay the barrow of laced sticks which had carried the body to the grave. The bodies had decayed, the dirt fallen in, and the graves were yawning. Around this scene of desolation and death nature was rioting in beauty. The ground was covered with flowers, and on every bush and tree and flying in flocks over our heads, wanton in gaiety of color, were parrots, whose senseless chattering disturbed the stillness of the grave.

Returning to the town, we found about twelve hundred soldiers drawn up in the plaza for evening parade, their aspect ferocious and banditti-like. Convicts peeped through the gratings of the prison and walked in chains on the plaza, and the whole scene inspired the refreshing realization that sometimes crimes were punished. With all their ferocity of appearance, the officers, mounted on prancing mules or very small horses, almost hidden in saddlecloth and armor, had an air bordering upon the mock heroic. While we were looking at them, General Cascara, the commandant of the department, rode up to the line attended by a servant. He was an Italian, about sixty years old, who had served under Napoleon in Italy; on the downfall of the emperor he had fled to Central America. Banished by Morazán, after eight years in exile he had just recently returned to this country, and six months before had been appointed to this command. He was ghastly pale, and evidently in feeble health. I could not but think that, if recollections of the pomp of war under the Emperor ever crossed his mind, he must needs blush to contemplate the barefooted detachment he now commanded.

When he returned to his house, we followed him and presented our passport. Like the commandant at Izabal, he seemed ill at ease and spoke much of the distracted state of the country. He was dissatisfied, too, with the route I proposed to take; although I told him my purpose was merely to visit the ruins of Copán, he was evidently apprehensive that I intended going to San Salvador to present my credentials to the Federal government. He gave me a visa,

however, as I required; but after we left, he called Augustin back and questioned him very closely as to our purposes. This made me indignant, but I smothered my feelings when I considered the distracted state of the country and the game of life and death that was then being played throughout the land.

We did not at first know whether the interesting lady who had welcomed us was a señora or a señorita, but unhappily we found out that the man whom we supposed to be her father was, in fact, her husband. When we asked her about a fine ten-year-old boy whom we supposed to be her brother, she answered, "*es mío* (he is mine)." As if it were fated that the charm of her appearance be broken, when, according to the rules of courtesy, I offered for her choice a cigar and a *puro*,<sup>3</sup> she took the *puro*. But it had been a long time since I had seen a woman who was at all attractive, and her face was so interesting, her manners so good, her voice so sweet, the Spanish words rolled so beautifully from her lips, and her frock was tied so close behind, that, in spite of the ten-year-old boy and *puro*, I clung to my first impression.

The next morning we rose early but our interesting hostess and her fatherly husband were already up and eager to assist us. It would have been an offence to the laws of hospitality to have offered them money, but Mr. Catherwood gave the boy a penknife, and I put on the finger of the señora a gold ring with the motto, *Souvenir d'amitié*. Her husband could not understand French nor, unfortunately, could she.

At seven o'clock we started. Passing the ruined church and the old village, we rode over a rich valley so well cultivated with Indian corn that we began to understand why the boy had asked us whether we had come to Chiquimula to buy maize. At a league's distance we came to the village of San Esteban, where, amid a miserable collection of thatched huts, stood a gigantic church which, like that at Chiquimula, was roofless and falling to ruins. We were now in a region which

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3. The *puro* would be a cigar and the "cigar" what we now call a cigarette.

had been scourged by civil war; only a year before the village had been laid waste by the troops of Morazán.

Passing the village, we came to the bank of a stream, in some places diverted into watercourses for the irrigation of the land; on the other side of the stream was a range of high mountains. As we continued along the bank of the river we met an Indian who advised our muleteer that the *camino real* for Copán was on the opposite side across the range of mountains. Turning back and fording the river, we found a great part of the bed dry, but after riding along it for some distance, could find no path that led up the mountain. When at length we struck one, it proved to be only a cattle path, and we wandered for more than an hour before we found the *camino real*, and this royal road was barely a track by which a single mule could climb. It became evident that our muleteer did not know the road, and the region we were entering was so wild that we had some doubts about following him. At eleven o'clock we reached the top of the mountain and looking back saw at a great distance and far below us, the town of Chiquimula; on the right, up the valley, the village of Santa Elena; and, rising above a few thatched huts, another gigantic and roofless church. On each side of us rose mountains still higher than ours. Some were grand and gloomy, with their summits buried in the clouds; others in the form of cones and pyramids were so wild and fantastic that they seemed to be sporting with the heavens, and I almost wished for wings that I might fly and alight upon their summits. Here, on heights apparently inaccessible, we saw the wild hut of an Indian, with his *milpa*, or patch of Indian corn. Clouds gathered around the mountains, and for an hour we rode in the rain. When the sun broke through we saw the mountaintops still towering above us, and on our right, far below us, a deep valley. We descended, and found it narrower and more beautiful than any we had yet seen. Bounded by ranges of mountains several thousand feet high, on its left was a range of extraordinary beauty covered with gigantic pines without any brush or underwood and with a red soil of sandstone. In front, rising above the miserable huts of the village and seeming to bestride the valley,

was the gigantic church of San Juan Ermita, reminding me of the Church of St. John in the wilderness of Judea, although the immediate scene was even more beautiful. At two o'clock we crossed the stream and entered the village. When we were opposite the church, the muleteer told us that the day's work was over; with all our toils, we had made only fifteen miles and were unwilling to stop so soon. The exceeding beauty of the place might have tempted us, but the only good plastered hut was occupied by a band of ruffianly soldiers, and we rode on. The muleteer followed with curses, and vented his spite by lashing the mules. Again we crossed the stream, and continued up the valley along the dry bed, which bore marks of the flood that washed it in the rainy season; in one hour we crossed the river half a dozen times. Heavy clouds rested on the mountains, and again we had rain. At four o'clock we saw on a high table on the left the village of Jocotán, with another gigantic church. According to the route agreed upon with the muleteer, this should have been the end of our first day's journey. We had been advised that the cura would be able to give us much information about the ruins of Copán, so we told the muleteer to cross over and stop there. But he refused to stop and, hurrying on the mules, added that since we had refused to stop when he wished, he would not now stop for us. I could not spur my mule beyond her own gait to overtake him, so I jumped off and ran after him on foot. Accidentally I put my hand on my pistols to steady them in my belt, at which he fell back and drew his machete. We came to a parley. He claimed that if we stopped now we could not reach Copán the next day. Willing to make a retreat, and since I did not wish to leave him any excuse for a future failing, I agreed to continue on our way.

At six o'clock we reached a beautiful table of land, on which stood another gigantic church, the seventh of its kind we had seen that day. Coming upon these churches in a region of desolation, and by mountain paths which human hands had never attempted to improve, their colossal grandeur and costliness were startling, and their abandoned state gave evidence of a retrograding and expiring people. This

particular edifice stood in a more desolate place than any we had yet seen. The grass was green, the sod unbroken even by a mule path; not a human being was in sight, not a single pair of eyes peered through the gratings of the prison. It was, in fact, a picture of a deserted village. We rode up to the cabildo, the door of which was fastened and the shed barricaded, probably to prevent the entrance of straggling cattle. We tore away the fastenings, broke open the door, and, unloading the mules, sent Augustin on a foraging expedition. In half an hour he returned from the nearby village of Camotán with *one* egg, being all that he was able to procure; but he had waked up the village, and the alcalde, an Indian with a silver-headed cane, and several alguaciles with long thin rods or wands of office, came down to examine us. We showed them our passport, and told them where we were going, at which, with their characteristic indifference of manner, they expressed no surprise. They could not read the passport, but they examined the seal and returned it. We asked them for eggs, fowls, milk, etc., to which they answered, "*no hay* (there is none)," a reply which was to become all too familiar; in a few minutes they retired and left us to ourselves.

The cabildo was about forty feet long and twenty feet broad, with plastered walls; its furniture consisted of a large table and two benches with high backs. The alcalde sent us a jar of water, and abusing the muleteer for stopping at a place where we could get nothing to eat, we made our dinner and supper of bread and chocolate, taking care not to give him any. There were pins in the walls for swinging hammocks, and in the evening we prepared for sleep. Mr. Catherwood was in his hammock and I was half undressed when the door was suddenly burst open and twenty-five or thirty men rushed in, the alcalde, alguaciles, soldiers, Indians, and mestizos, ragged and ferocious-looking fellows armed with staves of office, swords, clubs, muskets, and machetes, and carrying blazing pine sticks. The leader was a young officer of about twenty-eight or thirty with a glazed hat and sword and a knowing and wicked expression; we were informed later that he was a captain of one of Carrera's companies. The alcalde who was evidently intoxicated said

that he wished to see my passport again. I delivered it to him, and he handed it over to the young officer who examined it and said that it was not valid. In the meantime, Mr. Catherwood and I dressed. I was not very familiar with the Spanish language but, using Augustin as interpreter, I attempted to explain my official character, directing him to emphasize particularly the endorsements of Commandant Peñol and General Cascara. The alcalde paid no attention to my explanations; he said that he had seen a passport once before and that it had been printed on a small piece of paper not bigger than his hand, unlike mine, which had been issued by the government on a quarto sheet. Besides, they objected, the seal of General Cascara was only that of the department of Chiquimula, and it ought to be that of the State of Guatemala. I did all in my power to show the insufficiency of these objections but to no avail. After a warm altercation, the young officer told us that we could not proceed on our journey but must remain at Camotán until information could be sent to Chiquimula and orders received from that place. We had no disposition to remain in such hands but, unable to move them by threats of the consequences of their action, I told them that, rather than be detained here and lose time, I would abandon my journey to Copán altogether, and would, instead, return by the road on which I had come. But even to this solution they would not agree; both the officer and the alcalde peremptorily commanded us not to leave Camotán.

The young man then ordered me to give up my passport. I answered that the passport had been given me by my own government, that it was the evidence of my official character and necessary for my personal security, and that I would not give it up. Mr. Catherwood made a learned exposition of the law of nations, the right of an ambassador, and the danger of bringing down upon them the vengeance of the government *del Norte*, which I sustained with some warmth—but it was of no use. At length I told him again that I would not give up the passport, but that I would go with it myself, under a guard of soldiers, to Chiquimula, or whatever place they chose to send it. He answered insultingly that we would not go to Chiquimula or anywhere

else—neither forward nor backward—that we must stay where we were, and must give up the passport. Finding arguments and remonstrances of no use, I placed the paper inside my vest, buttoned my coat tight across my breast, and told him he must get it by force, to which the officer, with a gleam of satisfaction crossing his villainous face, responded that he would. I added, however, that whatever the immediate result, ultimately such action would be fatal to them, but he answered, with a sneer, that they would run the risk. During all this time, the band of cowardly ruffians stood with their hands on their swords and machetes, and two assassin-looking scoundrels sat on a bench with muskets against their shoulders, the muzzles pointed within three feet of my breast. If we had been longer in the country we should have been more alarmed, but as yet we did not know the sanguinary character of the people, and the whole proceeding was so outrageous and insulting that it roused our indignation more than our fears. Augustin, having previously suffered a cut on the head from a machete, was always bellicose, and he begged me in French to give the order to fire, claiming that one round would scatter them all; we had eleven charges, all sure, and we were excited. If the young man himself had laid his hands upon me, I think I should have knocked him down at least, but, most fortunately, before he had time to give his order a man wearing a glazed hat and roundabout jacket entered and asked to see the passport. I was determined not to trust it out of my hands, and held it up before a blazing pine stick while, at Mr. Catherwood's request, he read it aloud.

I have since doubted whether at first the officer had read it, or if he had, whether he had communicated its contents to the others, for when it was now read aloud it produced an effect upon the alcalde and his alguaciles who, after some moments of anxious suspense to us, decided not to execute their threat, although they insisted we remain in custody. I then demanded a courier to take a letter immediately to General Cascara, which at first they refused; but when I offered to pay the expense of the courier, the alcalde promised to send it. Knowing General Cascara to be an Italian and afraid to trust my Spanish, I wrote a note in English,

which Mr. Catherwood translated into Italian, informing the General of our arrest and imprisonment. The note explained the refusal of the *alcalde* and the soldiers who arrested us to accept my special passport from my own government, with its endorsements by Commandant Peñol and himself certifying my official character. I demanded that we be set at liberty immediately and allowed to proceed on our journey without further molestation, adding that we should, of course, report to my own government and that at Guatemala City the manner in which we had been treated. Not to mince matters, Mr. Catherwood signed the note as Secretary, and, having no official seal with me, we sealed it unobserved by anybody with a new American half dollar and gave it to the *alcalde*. The eagle spread his wings and the stars glittered in the torchlight. All gathered round to examine it, and then after locking us up in the *cabildo* and stationing twelve men at the door with swords, muskets, and machetes, they retired. At parting, the officer warned the *alcalde* that if we escaped during the night his head should answer for it.

The excitement over, Mr. Catherwood and I were exhausted. What a beautiful beginning to our travels—only a month from home and here we were in the hands of men who would have been turned out of any decent state prison lest they contaminate the other boarders. A peep at our beautiful keepers did nothing to reassure us. They were sitting under the shed directly before the door, and smoking cigars around a fire, their arms in reach. Their whole stock of wearing apparel was not worth a pair of old boots, and with their rags, their arms, and their dark faces reddened by the firelight, their appearance was ferocious; if we had attempted to escape, they would have been glad, doubtless, of the excuse for murder. We opened a basket of wine with which Colonel MacDonald had provided us, and drank his health. Relieved from immediate apprehensions, our prospects were, nevertheless, not pleasant, but, fastening the door as well as we could inside, we again betook ourselves to our hammocks.

Suddenly during the night the door was again burst open, and the whole ruffianly band entered, as before, with swords,



muskets, machetes, and blazing pine sticks. In an instant we were on our feet. In my first hurried impression, I thought that they had come to take the passport, but instead, to our surprise, the *alcalde* handed me back the letter with the big seal, saying there was no need to send it, that we were at liberty to proceed on our journey when we chose.

We were too well pleased to ask any questions, and to this day do not know why we were arrested or set free. My belief is, however, that if we had quailed at all, if we had not kept up a high, threatening tone to the last, we should not have been set free; and I have no doubt that the big seal did much in our behalf. Our indignation, however, was no less strong now that we considered ourselves safe in pouring it out, and we insisted that the matter should not end here and that the letter should go to General Cascara. The *alcalde* objected, but we told him that, if it were not sent, it would be the worse for him; after some delay, he thrust it into the hands of an Indian and beat him out of doors with his staff. In a few minutes the guard was withdrawn, and they all left us.

It was now nearly daylight, and we did not know what to do; to continue to Copán was to risk exposing ourselves to a repetition of the same treatment, and perhaps, as we advanced farther into the interior, with a worse result. Still undecided, for the third time we turned into our hammocks. At broad daylight we were again roused by the *alcalde* and his *alguaciles*, but this time they came to pay us a visit of ceremony. The soldiers who had made all the disturbance during the night had just happened to pass through the village, and by now had left. After some further deliberation we made up our minds to continue. Charging the *alcalde* again about the letter to General Cascara, we turned our backs upon him and his *alguaciles*; in a few minutes they all withdrew. We took a cup of chocolate, loaded our mules, and left the place now as desolate as when we entered it. Not a person had been there to welcome us, no one was there to bid us farewell.

## Chapter V



*An Indian funeral. Copán River. Woman's kindness. Hacienda of San Antonio. Strange customs. A mountain of aloes. The State of Honduras. Village of Copán. An ungracious host. Wall of Copán. History of Copán. First view of the ruins. Vain speculations. Applications for medicine. Search for an abode. A sick woman. Plagues of a muleteer. An unpleasant situation. A thunderstorm. Thoughts of buying Copán.*

SOON after we resumed our journey to Copán we began to ascend another mountain. We had not proceeded very far when we met some Indians, naked except for loin cloths, who bore on their shoulders a rude bier of sticks on which was a corpse which shook awfully under the movements of its carriers. Soon after we met another group, three or four men and a young woman, who were also carrying one of their dead to the graveyard of the village church; in this case the corpse was wrapped in matting. As we reached the top of a mountain we saw behind us a beautiful valley extending toward Jocotán; but all was wasteland, and we could not help but regret that so beautiful a country should be in such miserable hands.

At half past twelve we descended to the banks of the Copán River. It was broad and rapid, and in the middle was a large sand bar. We had difficulty in fording it, and some of the baggage, particularly the beds and bedding, got wet during the crossing. From the opposite side we again ascended another ridge, and from the top we saw the river winding through the valley. As we crossed the summit, by a sudden turn the river flowed along its base, and we could

look directly down upon it. Descending this mountain, we came to a beautiful stream where a gray-haired Indian woman and a pretty little girl, pictures of youth and old age, were washing clothes. We dismounted and sat down on the bank to wait for the muleteer.

I have forgotten to mention that the muleteer had with him a boy about thirteen or fourteen years old, a fine little fellow upon whom he imposed the worst part of the burden, that of chasing the mules, and who really seemed, like Baron Munchausen's dog, in constant danger of running his legs off. Our breach with the muleteer had not been healed, and at first we ascribed to him some part in our troubles at Camotán; at all events, if it had not been for him, we should not have stopped there. All day he had been particularly furious with the mules and they had been particularly perverse; now they had gone astray, and it was an hour before we heard his spiteful voice cursing as he loaded them.

Mounting again, we continued on our way, and at four o'clock saw in the distance a hacienda; it was on the opposite side of a valley and stood alone, promising a quiet resting place for the night. We turned off from the *camino real* into a wild path, stony and overgrown with bushes, and so steep that in order to make the descent we were obliged to dismount, let the mules go ahead, and help ourselves down by holding onto the bushes. At the foot of the hill we mounted and crossed a stream where a little boy playing in the water saluted first me and then Mr. Catherwood by crossing his arms upon his breast. This was a favorable omen; as we climbed a steep hill, I felt that here, in this lonely spot, away from the gathering places of men, we must meet kindness. On the top of the hill a woman with a naked child in her arms and a smile on her face stood watching our toilsome ascent. When we asked her if we could make posada there, she answered, in the kindest phrase of the country, with a face that spoke even a warmer welcome than her words, "*cómo no?* (why not?)" and when she saw that our servant had pineapples in his alforjas, she asked why he brought them, and if he did not know that she had plenty.

The situation of this hacienda of San Antonio was wildly beautiful. It had a clearing for a cowyard, a plantation of

corn, tobacco, and plantains, and a view of the high mountains by which it was surrounded. The house was built of poles plastered with mud, and against the wall in front of the door, on a white cotton cloth hung round with votive offerings, was a figure of the Saviour on the cross. The naked child which the mother carried in her arms was called María de los Angeles. While supper was in preparation, the master of the house arrived, a swarthy, grim-looking fellow, with a broad-brimmed sombrero and huge whiskers, and mounted on a powerful young horse, which he was just breaking to the mountain roads. When he knew that we were strangers asking hospitality, his harsh features relaxed, and he repeated the welcome the woman had given us.

Unfortunately, the boy of the muleteer became very ill. His master paid no attention to him; while the poor little fellow was groaning under a violent fever, the muleteer continued to eat with perfect indifference. We made the boy a comfortable bed on the piazza, and Mr. Catherwood gave him a dose of medicine. But our evening passed very differently from the last. Our host and hostess were a kind-hearted and simple couple. It was the first time they had ever met men from another country, and they asked many questions and examined our little traveling apparatus, particularly our plated cups, knives, forks, and spoons. We showed them our watches, compass, sextant, chronometer, thermometer, telescope, etc., and the woman, with great discernment, said that we must be very rich, and had *muchas ideas* (many ideas). They asked us about our wives, and we learned that our simple-minded host had two, one of whom lived at Jocotán, and that he passed a week alternately with each. We told him that in England he would be transported and in the North imprisoned for life for such indulgences, to which he responded that they were barbarous countries, and the woman, although she thought a man ought to be content with one, said that it was no *pecado*, or crime, to have two; but I heard them say, sotto voce, that we were *más cristianos*, or better Christians than they. He assisted us in swinging our hammocks, and about nine o'clock we drove out the dogs and pigs, lighted cigars, and went to bed. Including servants, women, and children, we numbered eleven

in the room. All around were little balls of fire, shining and disappearing with the puffs of the cigars. One by one these went out, and we fell asleep.

In the morning we all rose together. The boy was much better, but we did not think him in a condition to travel. His brutal master, however, insisted upon his going. For all that our kind friends had done for us, they would have charged us nothing; but, besides compensating them in money, we distributed among them various trifles. When bidding them farewell, I noticed with regret that a ring which I had given to the woman was then sparkling on her husband's finger! After we had mounted, the little boy who had saluted us at the stream came toward us, staggering under a load of six freshly cut pineapples; even after we had started, the woman ran after me with a piece of fresh sugar cane. All parted at the hacienda of San Antonio with kind feelings except our surly muleteer, who was indignant, as he said, that we made presents to everybody except him. The poor boy was most grateful, and, unfortunately for him, we had given him a knife, which made the muleteer jealous.

Almost immediately from the hacienda we entered a thick wood, dense as that of Mico Mountain, and almost as muddy. The ascent was toilsome, but the top was open and so covered with that beautiful plant that we called it the Mountain of Aloes. Some of these plants were just peeping out of the ground, others were twenty or thirty feet high, and some gigantic stalks were dead; these flowers, which would have kindled rapture in the breast of beauty, had bloomed and died on this desolate mountain, unseen except by a passing Indian.

In descending we lost the path and wandered for some time before recovering it. Almost immediately we began to ascend another mountain, from whose summit, looking completely over yet another mountain, we could see at a great distance a large hacienda. Our road lay directly along the edge of a precipice from which we looked down upon the tops of gigantic pines at a great distance beneath us. Very soon the path became so broken and ran so near the edge of a precipice, that I called to Mr. Catherwood to dis-

mount. The precipice was on the left side, and I had advanced so far that, on the back of a perverse mule, I did not venture to make any irregular movement, and rode for some moments in great anxiety. Somewhere on this road, but unmarked by any visible sign, we crossed the boundary line of the State of Guatemala and entered Honduras.

At two o'clock we reached the village of Copán, which consisted of half a dozen miserable huts thatched with corn. Our appearance created a great sensation. All the men and women gathered around to gaze at us. We inquired immediately for the ruins, but none of the villagers could direct us to them, and all advised us to go to the hacienda of Don Gregorio. We had no wish to stop at the village and told the muleteer to go on, but he refused, saying that his engagement was to conduct us to Copán. After a long wrangle we prevailed, and, riding through a piece of woods, once more forded the Copán River and came out upon a clearing. On one side was a hacienda, with a tile roof and a *cocina* and other outbuildings, evidently the residence of a rich proprietor. We were greeted by a pack of barking dogs, and all the doorways were filled with women and children, who seemed in no small degree surprised at our appearance; there was not a man in sight. The women received us kindly, and told us that Don Gregorio would return soon and would conduct us to the ruins. Immediately the fire was rekindled in the *cocina*, the sound of the patting of hands gave notice of the making of tortillas, and in half an hour dinner was ready. It was served up on a massive silver plate, with water in a silver tankard, but without knife, fork, or spoon; soup, or *caldo*, was served in cups to be drunk. Nevertheless, we congratulated ourselves upon having fallen into such good quarters.

In a short time a young man gaily dressed with an embroidered shirt arrived on horseback accompanied by several men driving a herd of cattle. An ox was selected and, by a rope thrown around its horns, the animal was drawn up to the side of the house, and by another rope around its legs, thrown down. Its feet were tied together, its head drawn back by a rope tied from its horns to its tail, and with

one thrust of the machete the artery of life was severed. The pack of hungry dogs stood ready, and, with a horrible clicking, lapped up the blood with their tongues. All the women were looking on, and a young girl took a puppy dog and rubbed its nose in the crimson stream to give it an early taste for blood. The ox was skinned, the meat separated from the bones, and, to the entire destruction of steaks, sirloins, and roasting pieces, in an hour the whole animal was hanging in long strings on a line before the door.

During this operation Don Gregorio arrived. He was about fifty, had large black whiskers, and a beard of several days' growth; from the behavior of all around, it was easy to see that he was a domestic tyrant. The glance which he threw at us before dismounting seemed to say, Who are *you*? but, without a word, he entered the house. In my intercourse with the world I have more than once found my overtures to an acquaintance received coldly, but I have never experienced anything quite so cool as the don's reception of me. I told him that we had come into that neighborhood to visit the ruins of Copán, and his manner said, What's that to me?, but he answered that they were on the other side of the river. I asked him whether we could procure a guide, and again he said that the only man who knew anything about them lived on the other side of the river. As yet we had not made sufficient allowance for the distracted state of the country, nor the circumstance that a man might incur danger to himself by giving shelter to suspected persons. Having relied on the reputation of the country for hospitality, the proof of which we had already enjoyed, I was rather slow in coming to the disagreeable conclusion that we were not welcome. This conclusion, however, could not be avoided; the don was certainly not pleased with our looks. I ordered the muleteer to saddle the mules, but that rascal, enjoying our confusion, positively refused to saddle his beasts again that day. We appealed to Don Gregorio himself, offering him payment, and, as Augustin said, in the hope of getting rid of us he lent us two mules on which we rode back to the village. Unfortunately, when we reached the village we found that the guide we sought was away; a brisk cockfight was then pending, and we received no en-

couragement, either from the appearance of the people or from invitation, to bring back our luggage to the village. And we learned, which was very provoking, that Don Gregorio was the great man of Copán, the richest man, the petty tyrant, and that it would be most unfortunate to have a rupture with him or even to let it be known at the village that we were not well received at his house. Reluctantly, but in the hope of making a more favorable impression, we returned to the hacienda. Mr. Catherwood dismounted on the steps, and took a seat on the piazza. I happened to dismount outside and, before moving, took a survey of the party. The don sat on a chair, with our detestable muleteer by his side and a half-concealed smile of derision on his face, talking of idols, and looking at me. By this time eight or ten men—sons, servants, and laborers—had come in from their day's work, but not one offered to take my mule, or made any of those demonstrations of civility which are always shown a welcome guest. The women turned away their heads, as if they had been reproved for receiving us; and all the men, taking their cue from the don, looked so insulting that I told Mr. Catherwood we would tumble our luggage into the road and curse the don for an inhospitable churl. But Mr. Catherwood warned me against it, urging that, if we had an open quarrel with him, after all our trouble we might be prevented from seeing the ruins. The don probably suspected something of what was in my mind and, fearing to push things too far and thus bring a stain upon his name, he pointed to a chair and asked me to take a seat. With a great effort, I resolved to smother my indignation until I could pour it out with safety. Augustin, too, was very indignant at the treatment we were receiving. On the road he had sometimes swelled his own importance by telling of the flags hoisted and cannon fired when we left Belize; and here he had hoisted more flags and fired more guns than usual, beginning with forty guns and going on to a cannonade. But it would not do; the don did not like us, and probably was willing to hoist flags and fire cannons too when we should go away.

Toward evening the skin of an ox was spread upon the piazza, ears of corn were thrown upon it, and all the men,



with the don at their head, sat down to shell them. The cobs were carried to the kitchen for fuel, the corn taken up in baskets, and three pet hogs, which had been grunting outside in expectation of the feast, were let in to pick up the scattered grains. During the evening no notice was taken of us, except that the wife of the don sent a message by Augustin that supper was being prepared; an additional message, that they had an oven and flour and would bake us some bread if we wished to buy it, somewhat relieved our wounded pride and discontent.

After supper all prepared for sleep. The don's house had two sides, an inside and an outside. The don and his family occupied the former, and we the latter. But we did not have even this to ourselves. All along the wall were frames made of sticks about an inch thick and tied together with bark strings; the workmen spread an untanned oxhide over the frames and prepared for bed. There were three hammocks besides ours, and I had so little room for mine that my body described an inverted parabola, with my heels as high as my head. It was vexatious and ridiculous or, in the words of the English tourist in *Fra Diavolo*,<sup>1</sup> "shocking! positively shocking!"

In the morning we found Don Gregorio's humor unchanged. We took no notice of him, but made our toilet under the shed with as much respect as possible to the presence of the female members of the family, who were constantly passing and repassing. We had made up our minds to hold on and see the ruins; fortunately, early in the morning, one of the crusty don's sons, a civil young man, brought from the village the guide of whom we stood in need.

By reason of many vexatious delays growing out of difficulties between the guide José and the muleteer, we did not get away until nine o'clock. Very soon we left the path, or road, and entered a large field partially cultivated with corn, which belonged to Don Gregorio. After riding for some distance through the field, on the edge of the woods

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1. A comic opera by Scribe and Auber, based on the life of the famous Neapolitan bandit Michele Pezza (1760-1806).

we reached a hut thatched with corn leaves where some workmen were preparing their breakfast. Dismounting and tying our mules to trees near by, we entered the woods, José clearing a path before us with a machete. Soon we came to the bank of a river and saw directly opposite a stone wall,



FIG. 1 *Wall of Copán*

with furze growing out of the top. Perhaps a hundred feet high, it ran north and south along the river, in some places fallen but in others entire; it had more the character of a structure than any we had ever seen ascribed to the aborigines of America. This was part of the wall of Copán (figure 1), an ancient city on whose history, books throw but little light.

Volumes without number have been written to account for the first peopling of the Americas. By some, the inhabitants of these continents have been regarded as a separate race and not one descended from the common father as the rest of mankind. Others have considered them the most ancient race of people upon the earth, ascribing their origin to some remnant of the antediluvian inhabitants of the earth who survived the deluge which swept away the greatest part of the human species in the days of Noah. Under the broad range allowed by a descent from the sons of Noah, many peoples have had ascribed to them the honor

of peopling the Americas: the Jews, the Canaanites, the Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, the Greeks, and the Scythians in ancient times; the Chinese, the Swedes, the Norwegians, the Welsh, and the Spaniards in modern times. North and South America have been joined together and rent asunder by the shock of an earthquake; the fabled island of Atlantis has been lifted out of the ocean; and, not to be left behind, an enterprising American has turned the tables on the Old World and planted the ark itself within the state of New York.

The monuments and architectural remains of the aborigines have heretofore formed only a small part of the groundwork for these speculations. Dr. Robertson<sup>2</sup> in his *History of America*, claims as "a certain principle, that America was not peopled by any nation of the ancient continent which had made considerable progress in civilization." "The inhabitants of the New World," he says, "were in a state of society so extremely rude as to be unacquainted with those arts which are the first essays of human ingenuity in its advance toward improvement." Discrediting the glowing accounts of Cortes and his companions, and those of soldiers, priests, and civilians, all of which concur in their representations of the splendor exhibited in the buildings of Mexico, Dr. Robertson goes on to say that the "houses of the people were mere huts, built with turf, or mud, or the branches of trees, like those of the rudest Indians." The temple of Cholula, this historian tells us, was nothing more than "a mound of earth, without any steps or any facing of stone, covered with grass and shrubs"; and, on the authority of persons long resident in New Spain who professed to have visited every part of it, he reports that "there is not, in all the extent of that vast empire, a single monument or vestige of any building more ancient than the conquest." In Dr. Robertson's time distrust was perhaps the safest side for the historian; but since that time a new flood of light has poured

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2. William Robertson (1721-1793), well-known Scottish historian and author of a *History of America*, 2 vols., 1777.

upon the world, and the field of American antiquities has been opened.

The ignorance, carelessness, and indifference with which the inhabitants of Spanish America view this subject is a matter of wonder. In our own country, wild and wandering ideas in regard to its first peopling have been inspired by the opening of forests, the discovery of tumuli, or mounds, and fortifications extending in ranges from the lakes through the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi, the finding of mummies in a cave in Kentucky, the discovery on the rock at Dighton of an inscription supposed to be in Phœnician characters, and the unearthing of ruins of walls and a great city in Arkansas and Wisconsin Territory. From such evidence there arose a strong belief that powerful and populous nations had once occupied the country and had passed away, leaving little knowledge of their histories.

In Mexico the evidence assumes a still more definite form. The first new light was thrown upon this subject in respect to Mexico by the great Humboldt, who visited that country at a time when, by the jealous policy of the government, it was almost as much closed against strangers as China is now. No man could have better deserved such fortune. Although at that time the monuments of the country were not a leading object of research, Humboldt collected from various sources information and drawings, particularly of Mitla, or the Vale of the Dead; of Xochicalco, the Hill of Flowers, a mountain hewed down and terraced; and of the great pyramid or Temple of Cholula which he, himself, visited. His own eloquent account of all this is within reach of the reader.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, of the great cities beyond the Vale of Mexico—cities buried in forests, ruined, desolate, and without a name—Humboldt never heard; or, if he did, he never visited them. It was only lately that accounts of their existence reached Europe and our own country, accounts which, however vague and unsatisfactory, had roused both

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3. Alexander van Humboldt. *Vues des Cordillères, et Monuments des Peuples Indigènes de l'Amérique*, Paris, 1816.

our curiosity and our skepticism—Mr. Catherwood and I arrived at Copán with the hope rather than the expectation of finding wonders.

Since the discovery of these ruined cities, the prevailing theory has been that they belonged to a race long anterior to that which inhabited the country at the time of the Spanish conquest. Early Spanish historians mention, for instance, a place called Copán which offered formidable resistance to Spanish arms. They describe its location as the same region of country in which we now find these ruins of a once inhabited city. There are, however, indications in their reports that the city of which they wrote was of inferior strength and solidity of construction, and of more modern origin.

Their city stood in the old province of Chiquimula de la Sierra, which was conquered by the officers of Pedro de Alvarado. Although no Spanish historian has given any particulars of this conquest,<sup>4</sup> we know that in 1530 the Indians of the province revolted and attempted to throw off the yoke of Spain. Hernando de Chávez was sent to subdue them, and after many sanguinary battles he encamped before Esquipulas, a place of arms belonging to a powerful cacique. On the fourth day, to use the words of the cacique himself, "more out of respect for the public tranquillity than from fear of the Spanish arms," the cacique "determined to surrender." The whole province thus was submitted again to Spanish dominion.

The cacique of Copán, whose name was Copán Cael, had been active in exciting the revolt and assisting the insurgents, so Hernando de Chávez, determined to punish him, marched against Copán, then one of the largest, most opulent, and most populous places of the kingdom. The camp of the cacique, with his auxiliaries, consisted of thirty thousand men, well-disciplined veterans in war armed with wooden

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4. Stephens obtained his information from *A History of the Kingdom of Guatemala* (ch. XXIV) by Domingo Juarros, translated by John Bailly and published in 1823 in London by John Hearne. The original Spanish edition was published in Guatemala in 1808. An earlier account of the same events can be found in Fuentes y Guzmán, *Recordación florida*, Guatemala, 1933 (modern edition).

swords having stone edges, and with arrows and slings. One side of the camp, says the historian, was defended by the ranges of mountains of Chiquimula and Gracias a Dios, and the opposite side by a deep fosse and an intrenchment formed of strong beams of timber, the interstices filled with earth, which had embrasures and loopholes for the discharge of arrows. Chávez, accompanied by some horsemen, rode well armed to the fosse from where he signaled his desire to hold conference. The cacique answered with an arrow, and then a shower of arrows, stones, and darts compelled the Spaniards to retreat. The next day Chávez made an attack upon the intrenchment. His infantry wore loose coats stuffed with cotton and were armed with swords and shields; the horsemen wore breastplates and helmets, and their horses were covered. The Copanes carried shields covered with the skin of the danta and guarded their heads with bunches of feathers. The attack lasted the whole day. The Indians, with their arrows, javelins, and pikes, the heads of which were hardened by fire, maintained their ground, and at the end of the day the Spaniards were obliged to retreat. Chávez, who had fought in the thickest of the battle, was alarmed at the difficulties of the enterprise and the danger to the credit of the Spanish arms. Receiving information that in one place the depth of the ditch which defended Copán was but trifling, the next day he proceeded to attack the spot. The Copanes, who had watched his movements, manned the intrenchment with their bravest soldiers. When Chávez's infantry were unable to make a lodgment, the cavalry came to their assistance. The Indians brought up their whole force, but the Spaniards stood like rocks, impassable to pikes, arrows, and stones. Several times they attempted to scale the intrenchments and were driven back into the fosse. Many were killed on both sides, but the battle continued without advantage to either until a brave horseman leaped the ditch. His horse was thrown so violently against the barrier that the earth and palisades gave way, and the frightened animal plunged among the Indians. Other horsemen quickly followed, spreading such terror among the Copanes that their lines broke and they fled. Copán Cael

rallied his forces at a place where he had posted a body of reserve, but unable to resist long, he was forced to retreat, leaving Copán to its fate.

As we gazed on the wall of the city on the opposite side of the river, this account of the city's conquest which the Spanish historians have given us, seemed to us most meager and unsatisfactory. It did not appear to us that the massive stone structures before us could have belonged to a city the intrenchment of which could be broken down by the charge of a single horseman. Since at this place the river was not fordable, we returned to our mules, mounted, and rode to another part of the bank, a short distance above. Here the stream was wide, and in some places deep, rapid, and with a broken and stony bottom. Fording it, we rode along the bank by a footpath encumbered with undergrowth, which José opened by cutting away the branches. At the foot of the wall which we had seen from the opposite bank we again dismounted and tied our mules.

The wall was of cut stone, well laid, and in a good state of preservation. We ascended by large stone steps, only some of which were well preserved, and reached a terrace, the form of which it was impossible to make out because of the density of the forest in which it was enveloped. Following a path which our guide cleared for us with his machete, we passed a large fragment of stone elaborately sculptured and half buried in the earth, and came to the angle of a structure with steps on the sides, which in so far as the trees allowed us to make them out, resembled the sides of a pyramid in form and appearance. Diverging from the base of the structure, and working our way through the thick woods, we came upon a square stone column, about fourteen feet high and three feet on each side, sculptured on all four of the sides, from the base to the top, in very bold relief. On the front side was carved the figure of a man (evidently a portrait) curiously and richly dressed, whose face was solemn, stern, and well fitted to excite terror. The design on the opposite side was unlike anything we had ever seen before; the remaining two sides were covered with hieroglyphics. About three feet in front of the column was a large block of stone, also sculptured with figures and emblematical

devices. From our guide we learned that the square column was an "idol"<sup>5</sup> and the block of stone an "altar." The sight of this unexpected monument put at rest once and forever all uncertainty in our minds as to the character of American antiquities, and gave us the assurance that the objects we were in search of were not only interesting as the remains of an unknown people, but were works of art as well, proving, like newly discovered historical records, that the people who once occupied the American continents were not savages. With an interest perhaps stronger than we had ever felt in wandering among the ruins of Egypt, we followed our guide, who, sometimes missing his way, with a constant and vigorous use of his machete conducted us through the thick forest, among half-buried fragments, to fourteen more monuments of the same character and appearance, some with more elegant designs, and some in workmanship equal to the finest monuments of the Egyptians. One, we found, had been displaced from its pedestal by enormous roots; another, locked in the close embrace of branches of trees, was almost lifted out of the earth; and still another had been hurled to the ground and bound down by huge vines and creepers. One with its altar before it stood in a grove of trees which grew around it, seemingly to shade and shroud it as a sacred thing; in the solemn stillness of the woods, it seemed a divinity mourning over a fallen people. The only sounds that disturbed the quiet of this buried city were the noise of monkeys moving among the tops of the trees and the cracking of dry branches broken by their weight. They moved over our heads in long and swift processions, forty or fifty at a time. Some with little ones wound in their long arms walked out to the end of boughs and, holding on with their hind feet or a curl of the tail, sprang to a branch of the next tree; with a noise like a current of wind, they passed on into the depths of the forest. It was the first time we had seen these mockeries of humanity and, amid these strange monuments, they seemed like wandering

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5. Modern archeologists use the term *stela* rather than *idol*. Stephens enclosed the word *idol* in quotation marks because of his doubts as to the accuracy of the term. In the subsequent pages of the present edition, this use of quotation marks has been eliminated.



spirits of the departed race guarding the ruins of their former habitations.

We returned to the base of the pyramidal structure and ascended by regular stone steps, which in some places had been forced apart by bushes and saplings and in others thrown down by the growth of large trees. In parts they were ornamented with sculptured figures and rows of death's heads. Climbing over the ruined top, we reached a terrace overgrown with trees and, crossing it, descended by stone steps into an area so covered with trees that at first we could not make out its form. When the machete had cleared the way, we saw that it was a square with steps on all the sides almost as perfect as those of the Roman amphitheatre. The steps were ornamented with sculpture, and on the south side, about halfway up, forced out of its place by roots, was a colossal head, again evidently a portrait. We ascended these steps and reached a broad terrace a hundred feet high overlooking the river and supported by the wall which we had seen from the opposite bank. The whole terrace was covered with trees, and even at this height were two gigantic ceibas (kapok trees), over twenty feet in circumference; their half-naked roots extended fifty or a hundred feet around, binding down the ruins and shading them with their wide-spreading branches.

We sat down on the very edge of the wall and strove in vain to penetrate the mystery by which we were surrounded. Who were the people that built this city? In the ruined cities of Egypt, even in the long-lost Petra, the stranger knows the story of the people whose vestiges he finds around him. America, say historians, was peopled by savages; but savages never reared these structures, savages never carved these stones. When we asked the Indians who had made them, their dull answer was "Quién sabe? (Who knows?)" There were no associations connected with this place, none of those stirring recollections which hallow Rome, Athens, and "The world's great mistress on the Egyptian plain." But architecture, sculpture, and painting, all the arts which embellish life, had flourished in this overgrown forest; orators, warriors, and statesmen, beauty, ambition, and glory

had lived and passed away, and none knew that such things had been, or could tell of their past existence. Books, the records of knowledge, are silent on this theme.

The city was desolate. No remnant of this race hangs round the ruins, with traditions handed down from father to son and from generation to generation. It lay before us like a shattered bark in the midst of the ocean, her masts gone, her name effaced, her crew perished, and none to tell whence she came, to whom she belonged, how long on her voyage, or what caused her destruction—her lost people to be traced only by some fancied resemblance in the construction of the vessel, and, perhaps, never to be known at all. The place where we were sitting, was it a citadel from which an unknown people had sounded the trumpet of war? or a temple for the worship of the God of peace? or did the inhabitants worship idols made with their own hands and offer sacrifices on the stones before them? All was mystery, dark, impenetrable mystery, and every circumstance increased it. In Egypt the colossal skeletons of gigantic temples stand in unwatered sands in all the nakedness of desolation; but here an immense forest shrouds the ruins, hiding them from sight, heightening the impression and moral effect, and giving an intensity and almost wildness to the interest.

Late in the afternoon we worked our way back to the mules, bathed in the clear river at the foot of the wall, and returned to the hacienda. Our grateful muleteer-boy had told of his dreadful illness and of the extraordinary cure effected by Mr. Catherwood; as a result, we found at the hacienda a ghastly looking man, worn down by fever and ague, who begged us for *remedios*. There awaited us, also, an old lady who had delayed the termination of her visit to the family in the hope that we would cure her of a malady from which she had suffered for twenty years. The sight of the medicine chest which we brought out converted the wife of the don into a patient also. Mr. Catherwood's reputation rose with the medicines he distributed and in the course of the evening he had under his care four or five women and as many men. We would have liked very much to practice on the don, but he was cautious. The percussion

caps of our pistols attracted the attention of the men, so we showed them the compass and the other possessions which had made our friend at San Antonio suppose us to be "very rich" and to have "many ideas." By degrees we became on social terms with all the house except the master. Having taken his ground, the don was too dignified and obstinate to unbend, but he did find a congenial spirit in the muleteer. When we were ready to retire our new friends made more room for our hammocks, and we had a better swing for the night.

In the morning we continued to astonish the people by our strange ways, particularly by brushing our teeth, an operation which, probably, they saw then for the first time. While thus engaged, the door of the house opened and Don Gregorio appeared, turning his head away to avoid giving us a *buenos días*. We resolved not to sleep another night under his shed, but to take our hammocks to the ruins, where if there was no building to shelter us, we would hang them up under a tree. My contract with the muleteer allowed us to stop three days at Cobán but did not provide for any use of the mules during that time. Undoubtedly he hoped that the vexations we met with would make us go on immediately, for when he found us bent on remaining, he swore he would not carry the hammocks and would not remain one day longer, but at length he consented to hire out the mules for the day.

Before we started for the ruins, a newcomer who had been conversing for some time with Don Gregorio stepped forward and said that he was the owner of the idols and that no one could go on the land without his permission; as proof of his claim he handed me his title papers. This was a new difficulty. I was not disposed to dispute his title, but I read his papers as attentively as if I meditated an action in ejectment. He seemed relieved when I told him that his title was good and that if my plans were not disturbed I would make him a compliment at parting. Fortunately, he had a favor to ask. Our fame as physicians had reached the village, and he wished *remedios* for a sick wife. It was important for us to make him our friend, so, after some conversation, it

was arranged that Mr. Catherwood, with several workmen whom we had hired, should go on to the ruins and make a lodgment there as we had intended; I promised in the meantime to go to the village and visit his sick wife.

This new acquaintance, Don José María Acevedo, was about fifty, tall, and well dressed (that is to say, his cotton shirt and pantaloons were clean). One of the most respectable inhabitants of Copán, he was inoffensive though ignorant. He lived in one of the best huts of the village; it was made of poles thatched with corn leaves and furnished with a wooden frame on one side for a bed and a few pieces of pottery for cooking. A heavy rain had fallen during the night and the ground inside the hut was wet. His wife seemed as old as he and, fortunately, was suffering from a rheumatism of several years' standing. I say fortunately, but I speak only in reference to ourselves as medical men and to the honor of the profession accidentally confided to our hands. I told her that a recent affliction would be more within the reach of art but, as this was an illness of long standing, it would require time, skill, and the watching of symptoms and the effect of medicine from day to day. For the present, I advised her to take her feet out of a puddle of water in which she was standing, and promised to consult Mr. Catherwood, an even better medico than I, and to send her a liniment with which to bathe her neck.

Don José María then accompanied me to the ruins where I found Mr. Catherwood with the Indian workmen. Again we wandered over the whole ground in search of some ruined building in which we could take up our abode, but there was none. To hang up our hammocks under the trees was madness; the branches were still wet, the ground muddy, and again there was a prospect of early rain. But we were determined not to go back to Don Gregorio's and when Don José María said that there was a hut near by, I asked him to conduct me to it. As we approached, we heard the screams of a woman inside and, entering, saw her rolling and tossing on a bull's-hide bed, wild with fever and pain. Starting to her knees at the sight of me, with her hands pressed against her temples and tears bursting from her

eyes, she begged me, for the love of God, to give her some *remedios*. Her skin was hot, her pulse very high; she had a violent intermittent fever. While I was inquiring into her symptoms, her husband, Don Miguel, entered the hut. He was a white man, about forty, dressed in a pair of dirty cotton drawers with a nether garment hanging outside. He had a handkerchief tied around his head and his feet were bare. I told him that we wished to pass a few days among the ruins, and asked permission to stop at his hut. The woman, most happy at having a skilful physician near her, answered for him, and I returned to relieve Mr. Catherwood, having added another to his list of patients. The whole party escorted us to the hut, bringing along only the mule that carried the hammocks. With the addition of Mr. Catherwood to the medical corps and his mysterious display of drawing materials and measuring rods, the poor woman's fever seemed frightened away.

The hut (figure 8) stood on the edge of a clearing, on the ground once covered by the city; almost at the very door was a stone fragment, which had been hollowed out and used as a drinking-vessel for cattle. The clearing was planted with corn and tobacco, and was bounded on each side by the forest. The hut was about sixteen feet square; its peaked roof, thatched with husks of Indian corn, was made by setting in the ground two upright poles with crotches, in which another pole was laid to support the peak of the roof; similar supports were on each side, but only about four feet high. The gable end was at the front; one half of it was thatched with corn leaves, whereas the other half remained open. The back part of the hut was also thatched, and piled up against it was Indian corn three ears wide. One side of the pile was unbroken, but the other side had been reduced to within three or four feet of the ground. In the front corner inside the hut was the bed of Don Miguel and his wife, protected by a bull's hide fastened at the head and side. The furniture consisted of a stone roller for mashing corn, and a *comal*, or earthen griddle, for baking tortillas. On a rude shelf over the bed were two boxes, which contained the wardrobe and all the property of Don Miguel and his wife except Bartolo, their son and heir. Bartolo was an overgrown

lad of twenty, whose naked body seemed to have burst up out of a pair of boy's trousers, disdaining a shirt. His stomach was swollen by a distressing liver complaint, and both his stomach and his livid face were clouded with dirt. There was only room enough for one hammock; in fact, the cross-sticks were not strong enough to support more than one man. The used side of the pile of corn, however, was just high and broad enough for a bed; by common consent, I took this for my sleeping place, and Mr. Catherwood hung up his hammock. We were so glad to be relieved from the churlish hospitality of Don Gregorio, and to be so near the ruins, that all seemed snug and comfortable.

After a noonday meal I mounted the luggage mule, with only a halter to hold her, and, accompanied by Augustin on foot, set out for Don Gregorio's to get the luggage. The heavy rains had swollen the river and Augustin was obliged to strip himself in order to ford it. Don Gregorio was not at home, and the muleteer, glad as usual of a difficulty, said that it would be impossible to cross the river with a cargo that day. Regularly, instead of helping us in our little difficulties, he did all that he could to increase them. He knew that if we discharged him, the only way left us to get mules at Copán would be to send someone to a place at least a two-day journey distant; he was also aware we had no one to send on whom we could rely. Uncertain at what moment it might be advisable for us to leave and not wishing to be left destitute, I was compelled to hire him to remain at a price so exorbitant that it gave me a reputation for having *mucha plata*, which, though it might be useful at home, I did not covet at Copán. Afraid to trust me, the rascal stipulated daily payments. At that time I was not acquainted with the cash system of business prevailing in the country. The barbarians are not satisfied with your custom unless you pay them besides, and the whole, or a large portion of it, must be in advance. I was accidentally in arrears to the muleteer; and while I was congratulating myself on this only security for his good behavior, he was torturing himself with the apprehension that I did not mean to pay at all.

In the meantime it had begun to rain. I settled my accounts with the señora, thanked her for her kindness, and

gave her an order to have some bread baked for the next day. Then taking with me an umbrella and a blue bag, contents unknown, belonging to Mr. Catherwood which he had particularly requested me to bring, I set out on my return to the ruins. Augustin followed with a tin teapot and some other articles for immediate use. As we entered the woods, my umbrella struck against the branches of the trees, frightening the mule. While I was endeavoring to close it, she fairly ran away with me. Having only a halter, I could not hold her back. Knocking me against the branches, she ran through the woods and splashed into the river, and, missing the fording-place, never stopped till she was breast-deep in the water. The river was swollen and angry, the rain was pouring down, and rapids were foaming a short distance below. In the effort to restrain her, I lost Mr. Catherwood's blue bag, but would have saved it if the beast had stood still. I tried to retrieve it with the handle of my umbrella, but as it floated under her nose she snorted and started back. I broke the umbrella in driving her across, and, just as I touched the shore, I saw the bag floating toward the rapids; Augustin, with his clothes in one hand and the teapot in the other, holding both above his head; was steering down the river after it. Supposing it to contain some indispensable drawing materials, I dashed among the thickets on the bank in the hope of intercepting it, but I became entangled among branches and vines. I dismounted and tied my mule, and was two or three minutes working my way to the river. I saw Augustin's clothes and the teapot, but nothing of him, and, with the rapids roaring below, I had horrible apprehensions. It was impossible for me to continue along the bank, so, with a violent effort, I jumped across a rapid channel to a ragged island of sand covered with scrub bushes and, running to the end of it, saw the whole face of the river and the rapids, but nothing of Augustin. I shouted with all my strength and, to my inexpressible relief, I heard an answer, very faint above the noise of the rapids. Presently Augustin appeared in the water and, working himself around a point of land, pulled himself up on the bushes. Relieved about him, I now found myself in a quandary. The jump back to

the bank was to higher ground and the stream was a torrent; with the excitement over, I was afraid to attempt it. It would have been exceedingly inconvenient for me at this moment if Augustin had been drowned, for now I needed rescue. Making his way through the bushes and down to the opposite bank with his dripping body, he stretched a pole across the stream. By springing upon the pole I touched the edge of the bank, slipped, and then, with the help of Augustin and the bushes, hauled myself up on the bank. All this time it had been raining very hard and now I found that I had forgotten where I had tied my mule. We were several minutes looking for her and, wishing everything but good luck to the old bag, I again mounted. Augustin, principally because he could carry them more conveniently on his back, put on his clothes.

Reaching the village, I took shelter in the hut of Don José María, while Augustin, being in that happy state that cannot be made worse, continued through the rain. There was no one in the hut but a little girl, and the moment the rain abated I followed Augustin. I had another stream to cross and it, too, was much swollen; the road which lay through a thick forest was also flooded. Very soon the clouds became blacker than ever; on the left was a range of naked mountains and the old stone quarries of Copán, along which the thunder rolled fearfully while the lightning wrote angry inscriptions on its sides. An English tourist in the United States once admitted the superiority of our thunder and lightning. Although I am pertinacious on all points of national honor, I concede this claim in favor of the tropics. The rain fell as if floodgates had been opened from above and, while my mule was slipping and sliding through the mud, I lost my road. Returning for some distance and again retracing my steps, I met a woman, barefooted and holding her dress above her knees. She proved to be my rheumatic patient, the wife of Don José María. While inquiring about the road, I told her that she was setting at naught the skill of the physician, and added, what I believed to be very true, that she need not expect to get well under our treatment. I rode on some distance and then again lost my way. I had



come out of the woods by a footpath which I had not noticed particularly and it was necessary to find it now to re-enter the woods. With cattle paths in every direction, for a mile I kept going in and out of them without hitting the right one. Several times I saw the prints of Augustin's feet, but soon, losing them in puddles of water, they only confused me more. It was nearly dark and not knowing which way to turn, like Mr. Henry Pelham when in danger of drowning in one of the gutters of Paris, I stood still and hallooed. To my great joy, I was answered by a roar from Augustin, who had been lost longer than I and was in even greater tribulation. He had the teapot in his hand, the stump of an unlighted cigar in his mouth, and was plastered with mud from his head to his heels—altogether a most distressful object. After comparing notes we selected a path to try. Shouting as we went, our united voices were soon answered by barking dogs and Mr. Catherwood, who, alarmed at our absence and apprehending what had happened, was coming out with Don Miguel to look for us. Back at the hut, having no change of clothes, I stripped and rolled myself up in a blanket in the style of a North American Indian. All evening peals of thunder clashed over our heads, lightning illuminated the dark forest and flashed through the open hut, and the rain fell in torrents. Don Miguel said that there was a chance that we would be cut off for several days from all communication with the opposite side of the river and from our luggage. Nevertheless, we passed the evening with great satisfaction, smoking cigars of Copán tobacco, the most famed in Central America, of Don Miguel's own growing and his wife's own making.

Don Miguel, like myself that evening, had but little wearing apparel, but he was an intelligent and educated man. He could read and write, bleed, and draw teeth or a law paper. Literary in his tastes, he asked Augustin if we had any books, adding that if they were in English, it would make no difference for "books were good things." It was delightful to hear him express his contempt for the understanding of Don Gregorio. A sub-tenant on the estate, Don Miguel was generally behind in his rent of four dollars a year. He said he

had not much to offer us, but we felt what was better than a canopied bed, that we were welcome guests. In fact, everyone was pleased: his wife expected us to drive away her fever and ague; Bartolo made sure that we would reduce the protuberance of his stomach; and Don Miguel liked our society. In these happy circumstances, the raging of the elements without did not disturb us.

All day I had been brooding over the title deeds of Don José María and, drawing my blanket around me, suggested to Mr. Catherwood "an operation" (hide your heads, ye speculators in uptown lots!) to buy Copán and remove the monuments of a bygone people from the desolate region in which they were buried, set them up in the "great commercial emporium," and found an institution to be the nucleus of a great national museum of American antiquities! But query, Could the idols be removed? They were on the banks of a river that emptied into the same ocean by which the docks of New York are washed, but there were rapids below, which, in answer to my inquiry, Don Miguel said were impassable. Nevertheless, I should have been unworthy of having passed through the times "that tried men's souls" if I had not had an alternative. I could exhibit by sample: I could cut up one idol and remove it in pieces, and then make casts of the others. The casts of the Parthenon are regarded as precious memorials in the British Museum; would not the casts of Copán be similarly regarded in New York? Other ruins might be discovered that would be even more interesting and more accessible. Very soon their existence would become known and their value appreciated, and it would be the friends of science and the arts in Europe who would get possession of them. They belonged by right to us and, though we did not know how soon we might be kicked out ourselves, I resolved that ours they should remain. With visions of glory and indistinct fancies of receiving the thanks of the corporation flitting before my eyes, I drew my blanket around me and fell asleep.

## Chapter VI



*How to begin. Commencement of explorations. Interest created by these ruins. Visit from the alcalde. Vexatious suspicions. A welcome visitor. Letter from General Casaca. Buying a city. Visit from Don Gregorio's family. Distribution of medicines.*

AT daylight the clouds still hung over the forest, but as the sun rose they cleared away; our workmen made their appearance, and at nine o'clock we left the hut. The branches of the trees were dripping wet and the ground very muddy. Trudging once more over the district which contained the principal monuments, we were startled by the immensity of the work before us, and very soon we concluded that to explore the whole extent of the ruins would be impossible. Our guides knew only of this district; but having seen columns beyond the village, a league distant, we had reason to believe that others were strewn in different directions, completely buried in the woods and entirely unknown. The woods were so dense that it was almost hopeless to think of penetrating them. The only way to make a thorough exploration would be to cut down the whole forest and burn the trees. This was incompatible with our immediate purposes and might be considered as taking liberties; besides it could only be done in the dry season. After deliberation, we resolved first to obtain drawings of the sculptured columns. Even in this there was great difficulty. The designs were very complicated, and so different from anything Mr. Catherwood had ever seen before as to be perfectly unintelligible. The cutting was in very high relief and required a strong body of light to bring up the figures; the

foliage was so thick and the shade so deep that drawing was impossible.

After much consultation, we selected one of the idols and determined to cut down the trees around it and thus lay it open to the rays of the sun. Here again was difficulty: there was no axe. The only instrument which the Indians possessed was the machete, or chopping-knife, which varies in form in different sections of the country. Wielded with one hand, it was useful in clearing away shrubs and branches but almost harmless upon large trees. The Indians, as in the days when the Spaniards discovered them, applied to work without ardor, carried it on with little activity, and, like children, were easily diverted from it. One hacked into a tree and when tired, which happened very soon, sat down to rest, and another relieved him. While one worked there were always several looking on. I remembered the ring of the woodman's axe in the forests at home, and wished for a few long-sided Green Mountain boys. But we had been buffeted into patience, and as we watched the Indians while they hacked with their machetes, we even wondered that they succeeded so well. At length the trees were felled and dragged aside; a space was cleared around the base, in which Mr. Catherwood's frame was set up, and he began to work. I took two mestizos, Bruno and Francisco, and, offering them a reward for every new discovery, with a compass in my hand set out on a tour of exploration. Neither of them had seen the idols until the morning of our first visit, when they followed in our train to laugh at *los ingleses*, but very soon they had exhibited such an interest that I hired them. Bruno attracted my attention by his admiration, as I supposed, of my person; but I found it was of my coat, which was a long shooting frock with many pockets. He said that he could make one just like it except for the skirts. He was a tailor by profession and, in the intervals of a great job upon a roundabout jacket, worked with his machete. But he had an inborn taste for the arts. As we passed through the woods nothing escaped his eye, and he was professionally curious, touching the costumes of the sculptured figures. I was struck with the first development of antiquarian taste in these two

mestizos. Francisco found the feet and legs of a statue and Bruno a part of the body to match, and the effect was electric upon both. They searched and raked up the ground with their machetes till they found the shoulders, and then they set up the entire statue except for the head. They were both eager for the possession of instruments with which to dig and find this remaining fragment.

It is impossible to describe the interest with which I explored these ruins. The ground was entirely new; there were no guidebooks or guides; the whole was a virgin soil. We could not see ten yards before us, and never knew what we should stumble upon next. At one time we stopped to cut away branches and vines, which concealed the face of a monument, and dig around and bring to light a fragment, a sculptured corner of which protruded from the earth. I leaned over with breathless anxiety while the Indians worked, and an eye, an ear, a foot, or a hand was disentombed; and when the machete rang against the chiseled stone, I pushed the Indians away and cleared out the loose earth with my hands. The beauty of the sculpture, the solemn stillness of the woods disturbed only by the scrambling of monkeys and the chattering of parrots, the desolation of the city, and the mystery that hung over it, all created an interest higher, if possible, than I had ever felt among the ruins of the Old World. After several hours' absence I returned to Mr. Catherwood and reported upward of fifty objects to be copied.

I found him not so well pleased as I had expected with my report. Standing with his feet in the mud, he was drawing with his gloves on to protect his hands from the mosquitoes. As we feared, the designs were so intricate and complicated, the subjects so entirely new and unintelligible that he was having great difficulty in drawing. He had made several attempts both with the camera lucida and without, but failed to satisfy himself or even me, who was less severe in criticism. The idol seemed to defy his art; two monkeys on a tree on one side appeared to be laughing at him, and I felt discouraged and despondent. In fact, I made up my mind with a pang of regret that we must abandon the idea of car-

rying away any materials for antiquarian speculation, and must be content with having seen them ourselves. Of that satisfaction nothing could deprive us. We returned to the hut with our interest undiminished, but sadly out of heart as to the result of our labors.

Our luggage had not been able to cross the river, but the blue bag which had caused me so many troubles was recovered. I had offered a dollar reward, and Bartolo, the heir apparent of the lesseeship of our hut, had passed the day in the river and found it entangled in a bush upon the bank. His naked body seemed glad of its accidental washing, and when the bag, which we supposed to contain some of Mr. Catherwood's drawing materials, was shaken, it gave out a pair of old boots. Being waterproof, the boots cheered Mr. Catherwood's drooping spirits, for he was ill with a prospective attack of fever and ague or rheumatism, from standing all day in the mud. Our men went home, and before coming to work in the morning, Francisco had orders to go to Don Gregorio's and buy bread, milk, candles, lard, and a few yards of beef. The door of the hut looked toward the west, and the sun set over the dark forest in front with a gorgeousness I have never seen surpassed. Again, during the night, we had rain with thunder and lightning, but not so violent as the night before, and in the morning it was again clear.

That day Mr. Catherwood was much more successful in his drawings; indeed, at the beginning the light fell exactly as he wished, and he mastered the difficulty. His preparations, too, were much more comfortable, as he had his waterproofs and stood on a piece of oiled canvas used for covering luggage on the road. I passed the morning in selecting another monument, clearing away the trees, and preparing it for him to copy. At one o'clock Augustin came to call us to dinner. Don Miguel had a patch of beans from which Augustin gathered as many as he pleased, and, with the fruits of a standing order for all the eggs in the village (being three or four a day), strings of beef, and bread and milk from the hacienda, we did very well. In the afternoon we were again called off by Augustin with a message that the

alcalde had come to pay us a visit. As it was growing late, we broke up for the day and went back to the hut. We shook hands with the alcalde, gave him and his attendants cigars, and were disposed to be sociable, but the dignitary was so tipsy he could hardly speak. His attendants sat crouching on the ground, swinging themselves on their knee joints; though their positions were different, they reminded us of the Arabs. In a few minutes the alcalde started up suddenly, made a staggering bow, and left us, and they all followed, Don Miguel with them. While we were at supper he returned, and it was easy to see that he, his wife, and Bartolo were in trouble. As we feared, the matter concerned us.

While we had been busy with our own affairs, we had but little idea what a sensation we were creating in the village. Not satisfied with getting us out of his house, Don Gregorio wanted to get us out of the neighborhood. Unluckily, besides his instinctive dislike, we had offended him in drawing off some of his workmen by the high prices which as strangers we were obliged to pay. He had begun to look upon us as rivals, saying everywhere that we were suspicious characters, that we had been the cause of disturbing the peace of Copán and of introducing soldiers and war into the neighborhood. In confirmation of this, two Indians who passed through the village reported that we had escaped from imprisonment, had been chased to the borders of Honduras by a detachment of twenty-five soldiers under Landaveri, the officer who arrested us, and that, if we had been taken, we would have been shot. The alcalde, who had been drunk ever since our arrival, resolved to visit us, to solve the doubts of the village, and to take whatever measures the presence of such dangerous persons and the safety of the country might require. But this doughty purpose was frustrated by a ludicrous circumstance. We had made it a rule to carry our arms with us to the ruins, and when we returned to the hut to receive his visit, each of us had, as usual, a brace of pistols in his belt and a gun in hand. Our appearance was so formidable that the alcalde was frightened at his own audacity in having thought of catechizing us, and he fairly sneaked off. As soon as he reached the woods, his attendants

reproached him for not executing his purpose, but he said, doggedly, that he was not going to have anything to say to men armed as we were. Roused at the idea of our terrible appearance, we told Don Miguel to advise the alcalde and the people of the village that they had better keep out of our way and let us alone. Don Miguel gave a ghastly smile; but all was not finished. He said that he had no doubt himself of our being good men, but we were suspected, the country was in a state of excitement, and he had been warned that he ought not to harbor us, and would get into difficulty by doing so. Don Miguel's wife could not conceal her distress; her head was full of assassinations and murders. Though alarmed for their safety, she was not unmindful of ours; she said that if any soldiers came into the village we would be murdered, and begged us to go away.

We were exceedingly vexed and disturbed by these communications, but we had too much at stake to consent to be driven away by apprehensions. We assured Don Miguel that no harm could happen to him, that it was all false and a mistake, and that we were above suspicion. At the same time, in order to convince him, I opened my trunk and showed him a large bundle of papers, sealed credentials to the government and private letters of introduction in Spanish to prominent men in Guatemala, describing me as *Encargado de los Negocios de los Estados Unidos del Norte*. One very special letter was from Don Antonio Aycinena, formerly colonel in the Central army, who was banished by Morazán and who is at this time living in New York. He had written to his brother the Marquis Aycinena, the leader of the Central Party, which was dominant in that district in the civil war then raging, recommending me very highly and stating my purpose in traveling through the country. This last letter was more important than anything else; if it had been directed to one of the opposite party in politics, it would have been against us, as confirming the suspicion of our being *enemigos*. Never was greatness so much under a shade. Though vexatious, it was almost amusing to be obliged to clear up our character to such a miserable party as Don Miguel, his wife, and Bartolo. But it was indispensa-



ble to relieve them from doubts and anxieties, enabling us to remain quietly in their wretched hut; the relief they experienced, and the joy of the woman in learning that we were tolerably respectable people, not enemies and not in danger of being put up and shot at, were most grateful to us.

Nevertheless, Don Miguel advised us to go to Guatemala or to General Cascara to procure an order to visit the ruins, and then return. We had made a false step in one particular: we should have gone directly to Guatemala and returned with a passport and letters from the government; but, as we had had no time to spare and did not know what there was at Copán, probably if we had not taken it on the way we should have missed it altogether. And we did not know that the country was so completely secluded; the people are less accustomed to the sight of strangers than the Arabs about Mount Sinai, and they are much more suspicious. Colonel Galindo<sup>1</sup> was the only stranger who had been there before us, and he could hardly be called a stranger, for he was a colonel in the Central American service and had visited the ruins under a commission from the government. Our visit did have perhaps some influence upon the feelings of the people; it had, at all events, taught Don Gregorio that strangers are not easily got rid of. But I advise anyone who wishes to visit these ruins in peace, to go to Guatemala first and apply to the government for all the protection it can give. As to us, it was too late to think of this, and all we could do was maintain our ground as quietly as we could. We had no apprehension of soldiers coming from any other place merely to molest us. Don Miguel told us, what we had before observed, that there was not a musket in the village; the quality and excellence of our arms were well known; the muleteer had reported that we were outrageous fellows and had threatened to shoot him; and the alcalde was an excessive coward. We formed an alliance, offensive and defensive, with Don Miguel, his wife, and Bartolo, and went

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1. Col. Juan Galindo, author of "The Ruins of Copán in Central America," in *Proceedings* of the American Antiquarian Society, Vol. II, 543-50, 1836.

to sleep. Don Miguel and his wife, by the way, were curious people; they slept with their heads at different ends of the bed, so that, in the unavoidable accompaniment of smoking, they could clear each other.

In the morning we were relieved from our difficulty and put in a position to hurl defiance at the traducers of our character. While the workmen were gathering outside the hut, an Indian courier came trotting through the cornfield up to the door. He inquired for *el Señor Ministro* and, pulling off his hat, took out of the crown a letter, which he said he was ordered by General Cascara to deliver into the right hands. It was directed to *Señor Catherwood, a Camotán o donde se halle*, and conveyed the expression of General Cascara's regret for the arrest at Camotán, ascribing it to the ignorance or mistake of the alcalde and soldiers, and enclosed besides a separate passport for Mr. Catherwood. I have great satisfaction in acknowledging the receipt of this letter; and the promptness with which General Cascara despatched it to "Camotán, or wherever he may be found," was no less than I expected from his character and station. I requested Don Miguel to read it aloud, told the Indian to deliver our compliments to General Cascara, and sent him to the village to breakfast with a donation which I knew would make him publish the story with right emphasis and discretion. Don Miguel smiled, his wife laughed, and a few spots of white flashed along Bartolo's dirty skin. Stocks rose, and I resolved to ride to the village, strengthen the cords of friendship with Don José María, visit our patients, defy Don Gregorio, and get up a party in Copán.

Mr. Catherwood went to the ruins to continue his drawings, and I to the village, taking Augustin with me to fire the Belize guns and to buy up eatables for a little more than they were worth. My first visit was to Don José María. After clearing up our character, I broached the subject of a purchase of the ruins. I told him that, on account of my public business, I could not remain as long as I desired, but that I wished to return with spades, pickaxes, ladders, crow-bars, and men, build a hut to live in, and make a thorough exploration, but that I could not incur the expense at the risk

of being refused permission to do so. In short, in plain English, I asked him, What will you take for the ruins? I think he was not more surprised than if I had asked to buy his poor old wife, our rheumatic patient, to practice medicine upon. He seemed to doubt which of us was out of his senses. The property was so utterly worthless that my wanting to buy it seemed very suspicious. On examining the paper, I found that he did not own the fee, but held it under a lease from Don Bernardo de Aguila, of which three years were unexpired; the tract consisted of about six thousand acres, for which he paid eighty dollars a year. He was at a loss as to what to do, but told me that he would reflect upon it, consult his wife, and give me an answer at the hut the next day. I then visited the alcalde, but he was too tipsy to be susceptible of any impression. I prescribed for several patients and, instead of going to Don Gregorio's, sent him a polite request by Don José María to mind his own business and let us alone, after which I returned to pass the rest of the day among the ruins. It rained during the night, but again cleared off in the morning, and we were on the ground early. My business was to go around with workmen to clear away trees and bushes, dig, and excavate, and prepare monuments for Mr. Catherwood to copy. While so engaged, I was called off by a visit from Don José María, who was still undecided as to what to do. Not wishing to appear too anxious, I told him to take more time and to come again the next morning.

The next morning he came, and his condition was truly pitiable. He was anxious to convert unproductive property into money but afraid, saying that I was a stranger and it might bring him into difficulty with the government. I again went into proof of character, and engaged to save him harmless with the government or release him. Don Miguel read aloud my letters of recommendation, and re-read the letter of General Cascara. Don José was convinced, but these papers did not give him a right to sell me his land; the shade of suspicion still lingered. For a finale, I opened my trunk and put on a diplomatic coat with a profusion of large eagle buttons. I had on a Panama hat, soaked with rain and

spotted with mud, a checked shirt, white pantaloons, yellow up to the knees with mud, and was about as *outré* as the negro king who received a company of British officers on the coast of Africa in a cocked hat and military coat, without any inexpressibles. But Don José María could not withstand the buttons on my coat; the cloth was the finest he had ever seen and Don Miguel, his wife, and Bartolo realized fully that they had in their hut an illustrious incognito. The only question was who should find paper on which to draw the contract. I did not stand upon trifles and gave some paper to Don Miguel, who took our mutual instructions and appointed the next day for the execution of the deed.

The reader is perhaps curious to know how old cities sell in Central America. Like other articles of trade, they are regulated by the quantity in the market and the demand; but, not being staple articles like cotton and indigo, they were held at fancy prices, and at that time were dull of sale. I paid fifty dollars for Copán. There was never any difficulty about price. I offered that sum, for which Don José María thought me only a fool; if I had offered more, he would probably have considered me something worse.

We had regular communications with the hacienda by means of Francisco, who brought thence every morning a large *guacal* of milk, carrying it a distance of three miles, and fording the river twice. The ladies of the hacienda had sent us word that they intended to pay us a visit, and this morning Don Gregorio's wife appeared, leading a procession of all the women of the house, servants, and children with two of her sons. We received them among the ruins, seated them as well as we could, and, as the first act of civility, gave them cigars all around. It can hardly be believed, but not one of them, not even Don Gregorio's sons, had ever seen the idols before, and now they were much more curious to see Mr. Catherwood's drawings. In fact, I believe it was the fame of these drawings that procured us the honor of their visit. In his heart Mr. Catherwood was not much happier to see them than the old don was to see us, as his work was stopped and every day was precious. As I considered myself in a manner the proprietor of the city, I was bound to

do the honors; having cleared paths, I led them around, showing off all the lions as the cicerone does in the Vatican or the Pitti Palace. But I could not keep them away and to the distress of Mr. Catherwood brought them all back upon him.

Obliged to give up work, we invited them down to the hut to see our accommodations. Some of them were our patients, and reminded us that we had not sent the medicines we promised. The fact is, we avoided giving medicines when we could, among other reasons, from an apprehension that if anyone happened to die on our hands we should be held responsible; but our reputation was established, honors were buckled on our backs and we were obliged to wear them. These ladies, in spite of Don Gregorio's crustiness, had always treated us kindly, and we would fain have shown our sense of it in some other mode than by giving them physic. But to gratify them in their own way, we distributed among them powders and pills, with written directions for use; and when they went away we escorted them some distance, and had the satisfaction of hearing that they avenged us on Don Gregorio by praises of our gallantry and attentions.

## Chapter VII

*Survey of the ruins. Account of them by Juarros and by Colonel Galindo. Their situation. Their extent. Plan of survey. Pyramidal structures. Rows of death's heads. Remarkable portrait. Idols. Character of the engravings. Ranges of terraces. A portrait. Courtyards. Curious altar. Tablets of hieroglyphics. Gigantic head. Stone quarries. More applicants for medicine. Idols and altars. Buried image. Material of the statues. Idols originally painted. Circular altar. Antiquity of Copán.*

THAT night there was no rain, and the next day, as the ground was somewhat dry, we commenced a regular survey of the ruins. It was my first essay in engineering. Our surveying apparatus was not very extensive; we had a good surveying compass, and the rest consisted of a reel of tape which Mr. Catherwood had used in a survey of the ruins of Thebes and Jerusalem. My part of the business was very scientific. I had to direct the Indians in cutting straight lines through the woods, make Bruno and Francisco stick their hats on poles to mark the stations, and measure up to them. The second day we were thoroughly in the spirit of it.

That day Don José María refused to execute the contract. Don Gregorio was the cause. He had ceased to interfere with us, but at the idea of our actually taking root in the neighborhood he could not contain himself and persuaded Don José María that he would get into difficulty by having anything to do with us; he even told him that General Cascara's passport was worthless, and that General Cascara himself had gone over to Morazán. He carried his point for the

moment, but in the end we beat him, and the contract was executed.

After three days of very hard but very interesting labor, we finished the survey, the results of which I intend to inflict upon the reader; but before doing so I will mention the little that was previously known of these ruins.

Juarros, the historian of Guatemala, says, "Francisco de Fuentes, who wrote the *Chronicles of the Kingdom of Guatemala*, assures us that in his time, that is, in the year 1700, the great circus of Copán still remained entire. This was a circular space surrounded by stone pyramids about six yards high, and very well constructed. At the bases of these pyramids were figures, both male and female, of very excellent sculpture, which then retained the colours they had been enameled with, and, what was not less remarkable, the whole of them were habited in the *Castilian costume*.<sup>1</sup> In the middle of this area, elevated above a flight of steps, was the place of sacrifice. Fuentes also affirms that a short distance from the circus there was a portal constructed of stone, on the columns of which were the figures of men, likewise represented in *Spanish habits*, with hose, and ruff around the neck, sword, cap, and short cloak. On entering the gateway there are two fine stone pyramids, moderately large and lofty, from which is suspended a hammock that contains two human figures, one of each sex, clothed in the Indian style. Astonishment is forcibly excited on viewing this structure, because, large as it is, there is no appearance of the component parts being joined together; and though entirely of one stone, and of an enormous weight, it may be put in motion by the slightest impulse of the hand."<sup>2</sup>

From this time, that is, from the year 1700, there is no account of these ruins until the visit of Colonel Galindo in 1836, before referred to, who examined them under a commission from the Central American government, and whose communications on the subject were published in the pro-

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1. This is, of course, not true, but rather a flight of fancy on the part of Fuentes y Guzmán.

2. Domingo Juarros. *A History of the Kingdom of Guatemala*, translated by John Bailly, London: John Hearne, 1923, pp. 56 and 57.

ceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of Paris, and in the Literary Gazette of London. He is the only man in Central America who has given any attention at all to the subject of antiquities, or who has ever presented Copán to the consideration of Europe and our own country. Not being an artist, his account is necessarily unsatisfactory and imperfect, but it is not exaggerated. Indeed, it falls short of the marvelous account given by Fuentes one hundred and thirty-five years before, and makes no mention of the movable stone hammock with the sitting figures, which were our great inducement to visit the ruins. No plans or drawings have ever been published, nor anything that can give even an idea of that valley of romance and wonder where, as has been remarked, the genii who attended on King Solomon seem to have been the artists.

It lies in the district of country now known as the State of Honduras, one of the most fertile valleys in Central America and to this day famed for the superiority of its tobacco. Mr. Catherwood made several attempts to determine the longitude, but the artificial horizon which we took with us expressly for such purposes had become bent and, like the barometer, was useless. The ruins are on the left bank of the Copán River, which empties into the Motagua and so passes into the Bay of Honduras near Omoa, distant perhaps three hundred miles from the sea. The Copán River is not navigable, even for canoes, except for a short time in the rainy season. Falls interrupt its course before it empties into the Motagua. Cortes, in his terrible journey from Mexico to Honduras,<sup>3</sup> of the hardships of which even now, when the country is comparatively open and free from masses of enemies, it is difficult to form a conception, must have passed within two days' march of this city.

The extent along the river, as ascertained by monuments still found, is more than two miles. On the opposite side of the river, at the distance of a mile, there is one monument on

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3. The incredible overland journey from Mexico to Honduras undertaken by Cortes to punish Cristóbal de Olid, a rebellious lieutenant. A good account of it can be found in Chap. 3, Book VII, of Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*.



the top of a mountain two thousand feet high. Whether the city ever crossed the river and extended to that monument, it is impossible to say. I believe not. To the rear of the city is an unexplored forest in which there may be ruins. There are no remains of palaces or private buildings, and the principal part is that which stands on the bank of the river, which may perhaps with propriety be called the temple.

This temple is an oblong enclosure. The front or river wall extends on a right line north and south six hundred and twenty-four feet, and it is from sixty to ninety feet in height. It is made of cut stones, from three to six feet in length, and a foot and a half in breadth. In many places the stones have been thrown down by bushes growing out of the crevices, and in one place there is a small opening, from which the ruins are sometimes called by the Indians *Las Ventanas*, or the windows. The other three sides consist of ranges of steps and pyramidal structures, rising from thirty to one hundred and forty feet in height on the slope. The whole line of survey is two thousand, eight hundred and sixty-six feet; that the reader's imagination may not mislead him, I consider it necessary to say that, though gigantic and extraordinary for a ruined structure of the aborigines, the base of the structure is not so large as that of the great Pyramid of Ghizeh. The engraving (figure 9) gives the plan according to our survey; reference to it will assist the reader to understand the description.

To begin on the right: Near the southwest corner of the river wall and the south wall is a recess which was probably once occupied by a colossal monument fronting the water, no part of which is now visible; probably it fell and broke, the fragments being buried or washed away by the floods of the rainy season. Beyond are the remains of two small pyramidal structures, to the largest of which is attached a wall running along the west bank of the river; this appears to have been one of the principal walls of the city. Between the two pyramids there seems to have been a gateway or principal entrance from the water.

The south wall runs at right angles to the river, beginning with a range of steps about thirty feet high, each step

being about eighteen inches square. At the southeast corner is a massive pyramidal structure one hundred and twenty-feet high on the slope. On the right are other remains of terraces and pyramidal buildings, and probably a gateway, a passage about twenty feet wide into a quadrangular area two hundred and fifty feet square, two sides of which are



FIG. 2 *Death's Head at Copán*

massive pyramids one hundred and twenty feet high on the slope.

At the foot of these structures, and in different parts of the quadrangular area, are numerous remains of sculpture. At the point marked *E* is a colossal monument richly sculptured, now fallen and ruined. Behind it fragments of sculpture, thrown from their places by trees, are strewn and lying loose on the side of the pyramid from the base to the top. Among them our attention was forcibly arrested by rows of death's heads of gigantic proportions, still standing in their places about halfway up the side of the pyramid; the effect was extraordinary. The engraving (figure 2) represents one of them.

At the time of our visit we had no doubt that these were death's heads, but it has been suggested to me since that the drawing is more like the skull of a monkey than that of a man. And, in connection with this remark, I add that our

attention was attracted at the time, though not so forcibly, to the remains of a colossal ape or baboon among the fragments on this side. It strongly resembled in outline and appearance the four monstrous animals which once stood in front of, and attached to the base of, the obelisk of Luxor, now in Paris,<sup>4</sup> animals which, under the name of *Cynocephali*, were worshiped at Thebes. This fragment was about six feet high; the head was wanting and the trunk lay on the side of the pyramid. We rolled the trunk down several steps when it fell among a mass of stones from which we could not disengage it. We had no such idea at the time, but it is not absurd to suppose the sculptured skulls to be intended for the heads of monkeys, and that these animals were worshiped as deities by the people who built Copán.

Among the fragments lying on the ground near this place, is a remarkable portrait, of which the engraving (figure 3) is a representation. It is probably the portrait of some king, chieftain, or sage. The mouth is injured, and also part of the ornament over the wreath that crowns the head. The expression is noble and severe, and the whole character shows a close imitation of nature.

At the point marked *D* stands one of the columns or idols which give the peculiar character to the ruins of Copán; the front view of the idol is reproduced in figure 10, to which I particularly request the attention of the reader. It stands with its face to the east, about six feet from the base of the pyramidal wall. It is thirteen feet in height, four feet in front, and three deep, and sculptured on all four of its sides from the base to the top; it is one of the richest and most elaborate specimens in the whole extent of the ruins. Originally it was painted, the marks of red color being still distinctly visible. Before it, at a distance of about eight feet, is a large block of sculptured stone, which the Indians call an altar. The subject of the front is a full-length figure, the face wanting beard and of a feminine cast, though the dress seems that of a man. On the two sides are rows of

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4. Stephens notes that "as it stands in Paris, these figures are wanting to make it complete as it stood at Thebes, the obelisk alone having been removed."

hieroglyphics, which probably recite the history of this mysterious personage.

As the monuments speak for themselves, I shall abstain from any verbal description; I have so many to present to



FIG. 3 *Portrait at Copán*

the reader, all differing very greatly in detail, that it will be impossible, within reasonable limits, to present our own speculations as to their character. I will only remark that, from the beginning, our great object and effort was to procure true copies of the originals, adding nothing for effect as pictures. Mr. Catherwood made the outline of all the drawings with the camera lucida, and divided his paper into sections, so as to preserve the utmost accuracy of proportion. The engravings were made, with the same regard to truth, from drawings reduced by Mr. Catherwood himself, the originals being also in the hands of the engraver. I consider

it proper to mention that a portion of them (one of which is reproduced in this volume as figure 10) were sent to London, and executed on wood by engravers whose names stand among the very first in England; yet, though done with exquisite skill, and most effective as pictures, they failed to give the true character and expression of the originals; at some considerable loss both of time and money, they were all thrown aside, and re-engraved on steel. Proofs of every plate were given to Mr. Catherwood, who made such corrections as were necessary; in my opinion, they are as true copies as can be presented and, except for the stones themselves, the reader could not have better materials for speculation and study.

Following the wall, at the place marked *C* is another monument or idol (figure 11) of the same size and in many respects similar. The character of this image as it stands at the foot of the pyramidal wall with masses of fallen stone resting against its base, is grand, and it would be difficult to exceed the richness of the ornament and sharpness of the sculpture. This, too, was painted, and the red is still distinctly visible.

The whole quadrangle is overgrown with trees and interspersed with fragments of fine sculpture, particularly on the east side, and at the northeast corner is a narrow passage, which was probably a third gateway.

On the right, running off into the forest, is a confused range of terraces ornamented with death's heads, some of which are still in position, while others lie about as they have fallen or been thrown down. Turning northward, the range on the left hand continues a high, massive, pyramidal structure, with trees growing out of it to the very top. At a short distance is a detached pyramid (marked *Z* on the plan) about fifty feet square and thirty feet high, which is tolerably perfect. Along this range, which continues for a distance of about four hundred feet, decreasing somewhat in height, are but few remains of sculpture.

The range of structures turns at right angles to the left and runs to the river, joining the other extremity of the wall at which we began our survey. The bank was elevated about thirty feet above the river and had been protected by a wall

of stone, most of which had fallen down. Among the fragments lying on the ground on this side is the portrait shown in figure 4.

The plan was complicated and, the whole ground being overgrown with trees, difficult to make out. There was no entire pyramid, but, at most, two or three pyramidal sides joined onto terraces or other structures of the same kind. Beyond the wall of enclosure were walls, terraces, and pyramidal elevations running off into the forest, which sometimes confused us. Probably the whole was not erected at

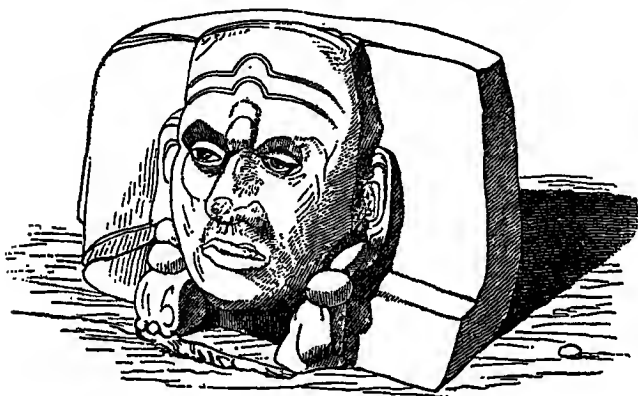


FIG. 4 *Portrait at Copán*

the same time; probably additions were made and statues erected by different kings or, perhaps, in commemoration of important events in the history of the city. Along the whole line were ranges of steps with pyramidal elevations probably crowned on the top with buildings or altars now ruined. All these steps and the pyramidal sides were painted, and the reader may imagine the effect when the whole country was clear of forest, and priest and people were ascending from the outside to the terraces and thence to the holy places within to pay their adoration in the temple.

Within this enclosure are two rectangular courtyards having ranges of steps ascending to terraces. The area of each is about forty feet above the river. Of the larger and most dis-

tant from the river, the steps have all fallen and now constitute mere mounds. On one side, at the foot of the pyramidal wall, is the monument or idol marked *B*, of which figure 12 represents the front. It is about the same height as the others, but differs in shape, being larger at the top than below. Its appearance and character are tasteful and pleasing, but the sculpture is in much lower relief; the expression of the hands is good though somewhat formal. The figure of a man shows the relative height. The back and sides are covered with hieroglyphics.

Near this, at the point marked *A*, is a remarkable altar which perhaps presents as curious a subject of speculation as any monument in Copán. The altars, like the idols, are all of a single block of stone. In general they are not so richly ornamented, and they are more faded and worn, or covered with moss; some were completely buried, and of others it was difficult to make out more than the form. All differed in fashion, and doubtless had some distinct and peculiar reference to the idols before which they had been placed. This one stands on four globes cut out of the same stone; the sculpture is in bas-relief, and it is the only specimen of that kind of sculpture found at Copán, all the rest being in bold alto-relievo. It is six feet square and four feet high, and the top is divided into thirty-six tablets of hieroglyphics which beyond doubt record some event in the history of the mysterious people who once inhabited the city. The lines are still distinctly visible, and a faithful copy appears in figure 5.

Figures 13 and 14 exhibit the four sides of this altar. Each side represents four individuals. On the west side are the two principal personages, chiefs or warriors, with their faces opposite each other, apparently engaged in argument or negotiation. The other fourteen are divided into two equal parties and seem to be following their leaders. Each of the two principal figures is seated cross-legged, in the Oriental fashion, on a hieroglyphic which probably designates his name and office, or character, and on three of which the serpent forms a part. Between the two principal personages is a remarkable cartouche containing two hieroglyphics well preserved, which reminded us strongly of the Egyptian method

of giving the names of the kings or heroes in whose honor monuments were erected. The headdresses are remarkable for their curious and complicated form; the figures all have breastplates, and one of the two principal characters holds in



FIG. 5 *Tablet of Hieroglyphics at Copán*

his hand an instrument, which may, perhaps, be considered a sceptre. Each of the others holds an object which can be only a subject for speculation and conjecture; it may be a weapon of war, and, if so, it is the only thing of the kind found represented at Copán. In other countries, battle scenes, warriors, and weapons of war are among the most prominent subjects of sculpture, but from the entire absence of them



here, there is reason to believe that the people were not warlike, but peaceable and easily subdued.

The other courtyard is near the river. By cutting down the trees, we discovered the entrance to be on the north side, by a passage thirty feet wide and about three hundred feet long. On the right is a high range of steps rising to the terrace of the river wall. At the foot of this are six circular stones, from eighteen inches to three feet in diameter, perhaps once the pedestals of columns or monuments now fallen and buried. On the left side of the passage is a high pyramidal structure, with steps six feet high and nine feet broad, like the side of one of the pyramids at Saccara,<sup>5</sup> and one hundred and twenty-two feet high on the slope. The top is fallen and has two immense ceiba trees growing out of it, the roots of which have thrown down the stones and now bind the top of the pyramid. At the end of the passage is the area or courtyard, probably the great circus of Fuentes,<sup>6</sup> but which instead of being circular is rectangular, one hundred and forty feet long and ninety broad, with steps on all the sides. This was probably the most holy place in the temple. Beyond doubt it had been the theatre of great events and of imposing religious ceremonies; but what those ceremonies were, or who were the actors in them, or what had brought them to such a fearful close, were mysteries which it was impossible to fathom. There was no idol or altar, nor were there any vestiges of them.

On the left, standing alone, two-thirds of the way up the steps, is the gigantic head pictured in figure 18. It is moved a little from its place, and a portion of the ornament on one side has been thrown down some distance by the expansion of the trunk of a large tree, as shown in the drawing. The head is about six feet high, and the style good. Like many of the others, with the great expansion of the eyes it seems intended to inspire awe. On either side of it, distant about thirty or forty feet, and rather lower down, are other frag-

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5. The name of these Egyptian pyramids is sometimes spelled Saqqara.

6. Fuentes y Guzmán, the seventeenth-century Guatemalan historian (see note 4, p. 76.)

ments of sculpture of colossal dimensions and good design; and at the foot are two colossal heads turned over and partly buried, which are well worthy the attention of future travelers and artists. The whole area is overgrown with trees and encumbered with decayed vegetable matter, with fragments of curious sculpture protruding above the surface, which, probably with many others completely buried, would be brought to light by digging.

On the opposite side, parallel with the river, is a range of fifteen steps to a terrace twelve feet wide, and then fifteen steps more to another terrace twenty feet wide, extending to the river wall. On each side of the center of the steps is a mound of ruins, apparently of a circular tower. About halfway up the steps on this side is a pit five feet square and seventeen feet deep, cased with stone. At the bottom is an opening two feet four inches high, with a wall one foot nine inches thick, which leads into a chamber ten feet long, five feet eight inches wide, and four feet high. At each end is a niche one foot nine inches high, one foot eight inches deep, and two feet five inches long. Colonel Galindo, who first broke into this sepulchral vault, found the niches and the ground full of red earthenware dishes and pots, more than fifty of which, he says, were full of human bones packed in lime. He also found several sharp-edged and pointed knives of *chaya* (obsidian) and a small death's head carved in a fine green stone, with its eyes nearly closed, the lower features distorted, and the back symmetrically perforated by holes, the whole of exquisite workmanship. Immediately above the pit which leads to this vault is a passage leading through the terrace to the river wall, from which, as before mentioned, the ruins are sometimes called *Las Ventanas*, or the windows. It is one foot eleven inches at the bottom, and one foot at the top, barely large enough for a man to crawl through on his face.

There were no remains of buildings. In regard to the stone hammock mentioned by Fuentes, which was in fact our great inducement to visit these ruins, we made special inquiry and search, but we saw nothing of it. Colonel Galindo does not mention it. Still it may have existed, and may

be there still, broken and buried. The padre of Gualán told us that he had seen it, and in our inquiries among the Indians we met with one who told us that he had heard his father say that *his* father, two generations back, had spoken of such a monument.

I have omitted the particulars of our survey: the difficulty and labor of opening lines through the trees, climbing up the sides of the ruined pyramids, measuring steps, and the aggravation of all these from our want of materials and help and our imperfect knowledge of the language. The people of Copán could not comprehend what we were about, and thought we were practising some black art to discover hidden treasure. Bruno and Francisco, our principal coadjutors, were completely mystified. And even the monkeys seemed embarrassed and confused; these counterfeit presentments of ourselves aided not a little in keeping alive the strange interest that hung over the place. They had no "monkey tricks," but were grave and solemn as if officiating as the guardians of consecrated ground. In the morning they were quiet, but in the afternoon they came out for a promenade on the tops of the trees; and sometimes, as they looked steadfastly at us, they seemed on the point of asking us why we disturbed the repose of the ruins. I have omitted, too, what aggravated our hardships and disturbed our sentiment: apprehensions from scorpions, and bites of mosquitoes and *garrapatas*, or ticks, the latter of which, in spite of precautions (pantaloon tied tight over our boots and coats buttoned close in the throat), got under our clothes, and buried themselves in the flesh. At night, moreover, the hut of Don Miguel was alive with fleas, to protect ourselves against which, on the third night of our arrival we sewed up the sides and one end of our sheets, and thrust ourselves into them as we would into a sack. And while in the way of mentioning our troubles, I may add that, during this time, the flour of the hacienda gave out, so we were cut off from bread and brought down to tortillas.

The day after our survey was finished, as a relief we set out for a walk to the old stone quarries of Copán. Very soon we abandoned the path along the river and turned off to the

left. The ground was broken, the forest thick, and all the way we had an Indian before us with his machete, cutting down branches and saplings. The range lies about two miles north from the river and runs east and west. At the foot of it we crossed a wild stream. The side of the mountain was overgrown with bushes and trees. The top was bare and commanded a magnificent view of a dense forest, broken only by the winding of the Copán River and the clearings for the haciendas of Don Gregorio and Don Miguel. The city was buried in forest and entirely hidden from sight. Imagination peopled the quarry with workmen and laid bare the city to their view. Here, as the sculptor worked, he turned to the theatre of his glory, as the Greek did to the Acropolis of Athens, and dreamed of immortal fame. Little did he imagine that the time would come when his works would perish, his race be extinct, his city a desolation and the abode of reptiles for strangers to gaze at and wonder by what race it had once been inhabited.

The stone is of a soft grit. The range extended a long distance, seemingly unconscious that enough stone had been taken from its sides to build a city. How the huge masses were transported over the irregular and broken surface we had crossed, and particularly how one of them was set up on the top of a mountain two thousand feet high, it was impossible to conjecture. In many places were blocks which had been quarried out and rejected for some defect; and at one spot, midway in a ravine leading toward the river, was a gigantic block, much larger than any we saw in the city, which had probably been on its way thither to be carved and set up as an ornament when the labors of the workmen were arrested. Like the unfinished blocks in the quarries at Aswan and on Pentelikon Mountain, it remains as a memorial of baffled human plans.

We remained all day on the top of the range. The close forest in which we had been laboring made us feel more sensibly the beauty of the extended view. On the top of the range was a quarried block. With the *chaya* stone found among the ruins and supposed to be the instrument of sculpture, we wrote our names upon it. They stand alone, and

few will ever see them. Late in the afternoon we returned from our walk and struck the river about a mile above the ruins, near a stone wall with a circular building and a pit, apparently for a reservoir.

As we approached our hut, we saw tied outside two horses with sidesaddles, and heard the cry of a child within. A party had arrived, consisting of an old woman and her daughter, her son, and his wife and child, and their visit was to "the medicos." We had had so many applications for *remedios*, our list of patients had increased so rapidly, and we had been so much annoyed every evening with weighing and measuring medicines, that, influenced also by the apprehensions before referred to, we had given out our intention to discontinue practice. But our fame had extended so far that these people had actually come from beyond San Antonio, more than thirty miles distant, to be cured, and it was hard to send them away without doing something for them. As Mr. Catherwood was the medico in whom the public had most confidence, I scarcely paid any attention to them, unless to observe that they were much more respectable in dress and appearance than any patients we had had except the members of Don Gregorio's family. But during the evening I was attracted by the tone in which the mother spoke of the daughter, and for the first time noticed in the latter an extreme delicacy of figure and a pretty foot with a neat shoe and clean stocking. She had a shawl drawn over her head which, when I spoke to her, she removed, turning up a pair of the most soft and dovelike eyes that mine had ever met. She was the first of our patients in whom I took any interest, and I could not deny myself the physician's privilege of taking her hand in mine. While she thought we were consulting in regard to her malady, we were speaking of her interesting face. But the interest which we took in her was melancholy and painful, for we felt that she was a delicate flower, born to bloom but for a season and, even at the moment of unfolding its beauties, doomed to die.

The reader is aware that our hut had no partition walls. Don Miguel and his wife gave up their bed to two of the

women; she herself slept on a mat on the ground with the other. Mr. Catherwood slept in his hammock, I on my bed of Indian corn, and Don Miguel and the young men under a shed out of doors.

I passed two or three days more in making the clearings and preparations, and then Mr. Catherwood had occupation for at least a month. When we turned off to visit these ruins, we did not expect to find employment for more than two or three days, and I did not consider myself at liberty to remain longer. I apprehended a desperate chase after a government and, fearing that among these ruins I might wreck my own political fortunes and bring reproach upon my political friends, I thought it safer to set out in pursuit. A council was called at the base of an idol at which Mr. Catherwood and I were both present. It was resumed in Don Miguel's hut. The subject was discussed in all its bearings. All the excitement in the village had died away; we were alone and undisturbed; and Mr. Catherwood had under his dominion Bruno and Francisco, Don Miguel, his wife, and Bartolo. We were very reluctant to separate, but it was agreed, *nem. con.*, for me to go on to Guatemala, and for Mr. Catherwood to remain and finish his drawings. Mr. Catherwood did remain until, after many privations and difficulties, he was compelled to leave on account of illness. But he returned a second time and completed the drawings, and I give the result of the whole.

At a short distance from the temple, within terraced walls probably once connected with the main building, are the idols which give the distinctive character to the ruins of Copán (if the reader will look at the plan of Copán, figure 9, and follow the line marked "pathway to Don Miguel's house," he will see toward the end on the right the place where they stand). Near as they are, the forest was so dense that one could not be seen from the other. In order to ascertain their juxtaposition, we cut vistas through the trees and took the bearings and distances, and I introduce them in the order in which they stand.

The first is on the left of the pathway, at the point marked K. This statue is fallen and the face destroyed. It is

twelve feet high, three feet three inches on one side, and four feet on the other. The altar is sunk in the earth, and we made no drawing of either the idol or the altar.

At a distance of two hundred feet stands the idol marked *S*. It is eleven feet eight inches high and three feet four inches on each side; it stands with its front to the east on a pedestal six feet square, the whole resting on a circular stone foundation sixteen feet in diameter. Before it, at a distance of eight feet ten inches, is an altar partly buried; measuring three feet three inches above the ground and seven feet square, it stands diagonally to the idol. It is in high relief, boldly sculptured, and in a good state of preservation.

The engravings reproduced in figures 15 and 16 represent the front and back view of the idol. From the absence of a beard and from the dress, we supposed the figure on the front to be that of a woman; the countenance presents traits of individuality which lead to the supposition that it is also a portrait.

The back is a different subject. The head is in the center, with complicated ornaments over it, the face broken, and the border gracefully disposed; at the foot are tablets of hieroglyphics. The altar is introduced on one side, and consists of four large heads strangely grouped together, so as not to be easily made out. It could not be introduced in its proper place without hiding the lower part of the idol. In drawing the front, Mr. Catherwood always stood between the altar and the idol.

A little behind this is the monument marked *T* (figure 17). It is one of the most beautiful in Copán and in workmanship is equal to the finest Egyptian sculpture. Indeed, it would be impossible, with the best instruments of modern times, to cut stone more perfectly. It stands at the foot of a wall of steps, with only the head and part of the breast rising above the earth. The rest is buried but it is probably as perfect as the portion which is now visible. When we first discovered it, it was buried up to the eyes. Arrested by the beauty of the sculpture and by its solemn and mournful position, we commenced excavating. As the ground was level

up to that mark, the excavation was made by loosening the earth with the machete and scooping it out with the hands. As we proceeded, the earth formed a wall around and increased the labor. The Indians struck so carelessly with their machetes that, afraid to let them work near the stone, we cleared it with our own hands. It was impossible, however, to continue; the earth was matted together by roots which entwined and bound the monument. It required a complete throwing out of the earth for ten or twelve feet around, and, without any proper instruments and afraid of injuring the sculpture, we preferred to let it remain to be excavated by ourselves at some future time or by some future traveler. Whoever he may be, I almost envy him the satisfaction of doing it. The outline of the trees growing around it is given in the engraving.

Toward the south, at a distance of fifty feet, is a mass of fallen sculpture, with an altar, marked *R* on the map; and at ninety feet distance is the statue marked *Q*, standing with its front to the east, twelve feet high and three feet square, on an oblong pedestal seven feet in front and six feet two inches on the sides. Before it, at a distance of eight feet three inches, is an altar five feet eight inches long, three feet eight inches broad, and four feet high.

The face of this idol (figure 19) is decidedly that of a man. The beard is of a curious fashion and joined to the mustache and hair. The ears are large, though not resembling nature; the expression is grand with the mouth partly open and the eyeballs seeming to start from the sockets. The intention of the sculptor seems to have been to excite terror. The feet are ornamented with sandals, probably of the skins of some wild animals, in the fashion of that day.

The back of this monument (figure 20) contrasts remarkably with the horrible portrait in front. It had nothing grotesque or pertaining to rude conceits of Indians, but it was noticeable for its extreme grace and beauty. In our daily walks we often stopped to gaze at it, and the more we gazed the more it grew upon us. Others seemed intended to inspire terror and, with their altars before them, sometimes suggested the idea of a blind, bigoted, and superstitious people,



and of sacrifices of human victims. This always left a pleasing impression, but there was an even higher interest, for we considered that in its medallion tablets the people who reared it had published a record of themselves through which we might one day hold conference with a perished race and unveil the mystery that hung over the city.

At a distance of one hundred and forty-two feet in a southeasterly direction is the idol marked *P*. It stands at the foot of a wall rising in steps to the height of thirty or forty feet; the wall was originally much higher, but the rest had fallen and was now in ruins. Its face is to the north; its height is eleven feet nine inches, the breadth of its sides, three feet, and the pedestal, seven feet square. Before it, at a distance of twelve feet, is a colossal altar. It is of good workmanship, and had been painted red, though scarcely any vestige of the paint remains, and the surface is timeworn. The two engravings (figures 21 and 22) represent the front and back view. The former appears to represent the portrait of a king or hero, perhaps erected into a deity. It is judged to be a portrait, from certain marks of individuality in the features which are also observable in most of the others; its sex is ascertained by the beard, as in the Egyptian monuments, though it also has a mustache, which is not found in Egyptian portraits.

Again, the back of this idol presents an entirely different subject; consisting of tablets, each contains two figures oddly grouped together, ill-formed, and in some cases with hideous heads, while in others the natural countenance is preserved. The ornaments, diadems, and dresses are interesting, but what these personages are doing or suffering it is impossible to make out. This statue had suffered so much from the action of time and weather that it was not always easy to make out the characters; the light, coming through irregular openings among the branches of trees, is in all cases very bad.

The stone of which all these altars and statues are made is a soft grit stone from the quarries before referred to. At the quarries we observed many blocks with hard flint stones distributed through them which had been rejected by the workmen after they were quarried out. The back of this

monument originally contained two such blocks, but between the second and third tablets the flint had been picked out, and the sculpture is blurred; the other, in the last row but one from the bottom, remains untouched. An inference from this is that the sculptor had no instruments with which he could cut so hard a stone, and, consequently, that iron was unknown. We had, of course, directed our searches and inquiries particularly to this point, but did not find any pieces of iron or other metal, nor could we hear of any having ever been found there. Don Miguel had a collection of *chaya*, or flint stones, cut in the shape of arrowheads which he thought—and Don Miguel was no fool—were the instruments employed. They were sufficiently hard to scratch into the stone. Perhaps by men accustomed to the use of them, the whole of these deep relief ornaments might have been scratched, but the *chaya* stones themselves looked as if they had been cut by metal.

The engraving (figure 23) represents the altar as it stands before the last monument. It is seven feet square and four feet high, richly sculptured on all its sides. The front represents a death's head. The top is sculptured, and contains grooves, perhaps for the passage of the blood of victims, animal or human, offered in sacrifice. The trees in the engraving give an idea of the forest in which these monuments are buried.

At the distance of one hundred and twenty feet north is the monument marked O, which, unhappily, is fallen and broken (figure 24). In sculpture it is the same as the beautiful half-buried monument before given, and, I repeat, in workmanship equal to the best remains of Egyptian art. The fallen part was completely bound to the earth by vines and creepers, and before it could be drawn, it was necessary to unlace them and tear the fibers out of the crevices. The paint is very perfect and has preserved the stone, which makes it more to be regretted that it is broken. The altar is buried, with the top barely visible, which by excavating we made out to represent the back of a tortoise.

The next engravings (figures 25, 26, and 27) exhibit the front, back, and one of the sides of monument N, distant twenty feet from the last. It is twelve feet high, four feet

on one side, three feet four inches on the other, and stands on a pedestal seven feet square, with its front to the west. There is no altar visible; probably it is broken and buried. The front view seems to be a portrait, probably of some deified king or hero. The two ornaments at the top appear like the trunk of an elephant, an animal unknown in that country. The crocodile's head is seven feet from it, but it appears to have no connection with it. It is four feet out of

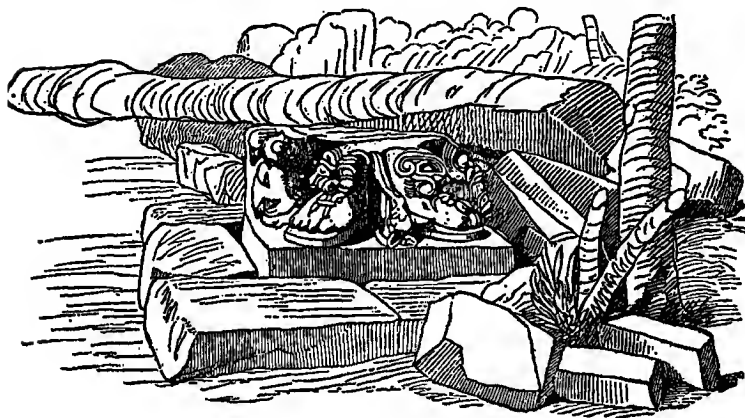


FIG. 6 *Fallen Idol at Copán*

the ground, and has been chosen for illustration here as one of the many fragments found among the ruins.

The back presents an entirely different subject from the front. At the top is a figure sitting cross-legged, almost buried under an enormous headdress, and three of the compartments contain tablets of hieroglyphics.

Not to multiply engravings, I have omitted side views, as they are, in general, less interesting. But in this case, the side view is particularly beautiful; the tablets of hieroglyphics are very distinct.

At the distance of twenty-eight feet in the same direction is the statue marked *M*, which is fallen, and lies on its back, with a tree across it nearly lengthwise, leaving visible only the outline, feet, and sandals, both of which are well sculptured (figure 6). Opposite is a circular altar with two

grooves on the top. It is three feet high and five feet six inches in diameter (figure 7).

The next three engravings (figures 28, 29, and 30) are the front, back, and side view of the monument marked *L*, distant seventy-two feet north from the last, with its front toward the west; it is twelve feet high, three feet in front, two feet eight inches on the side, with a pedestal six feet square. Before it, at a distance of eleven feet, is an altar very much defaced and buried in the earth.

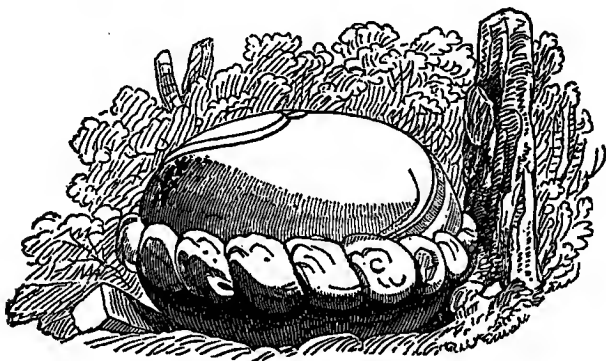


FIG. 7 *Circular Altar at Copán*

The front view is a portrait. The back is entirely made up of hieroglyphics, and each tablet has two hieroglyphics joined together, an arrangement which afterward we observed occasionally at Palenque. The side presents a single row of hieroglyphics, joined in the same manner. The tablets probably contain the history of the king or hero delineated, and the particular circumstances or actions which constituted his greatness.

I have now given engravings of all the most interesting monuments of Copán, and I repeat, they are accurate and faithful representations. I have purposely abstained from all comment. If the reader can derive from them but a small portion of the interest that we did, he will be repaid for whatever he may find unprofitable in these pages.

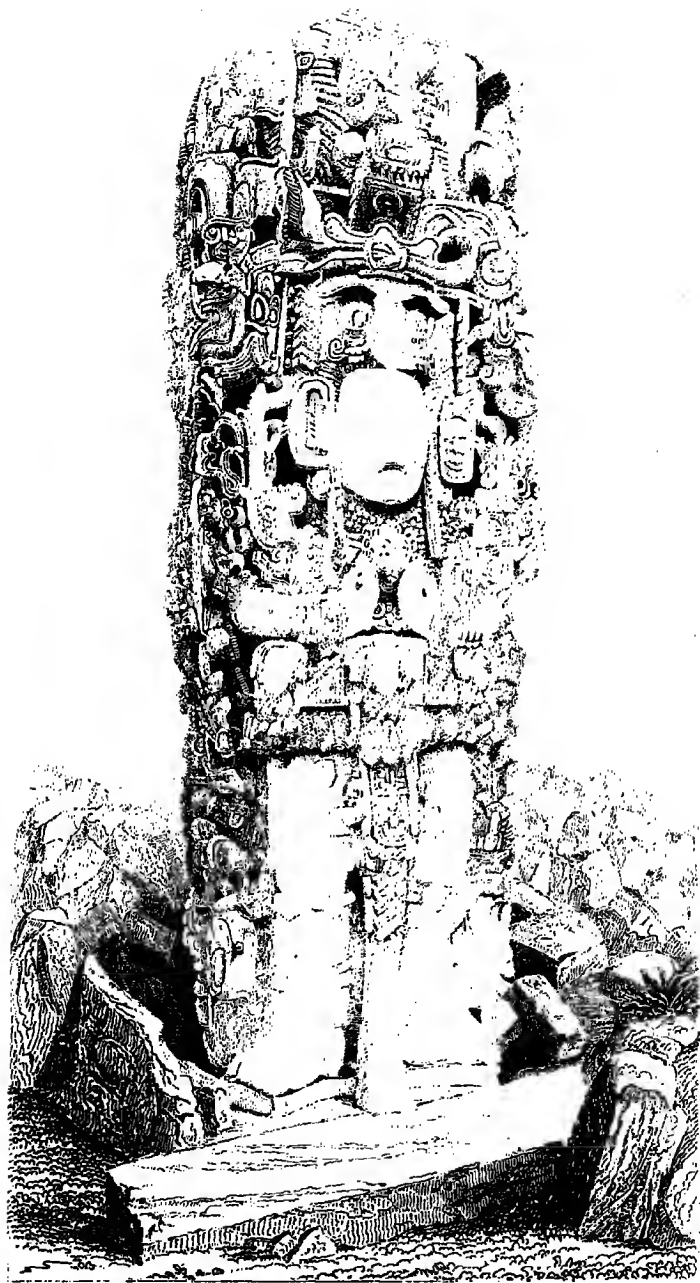
Of the moral effect of the monuments themselves, standing as they do in the depths of a tropical forest, silent and

solemn, strange in design, excellent in sculpture, rich in ornament, different from the works of any other people, their uses and purposes and whole history so entirely unknown, with hieroglyphics explaining all but being perfectly unintelligible, I shall not pretend to convey any idea. Often the imagination was pained in gazing at them. The tone which pervades the ruins is that of deep solemnity. An imaginative mind might be infected with superstitious feelings. From constantly calling them by that name in our intercourse with the Indians, we regarded these solemn memorials as idols—deified kings and heroes—objects of adoration and ceremonial worship. We did not find on either the monuments or sculptured fragments any delineations of human, or, in fact, any other kind of sacrifice, but we had no doubt that the large sculptured stone invariably found before each idol had been employed as a sacrificial altar. The form of sculpture most frequently met with was a death's head, sometimes the principal ornament and sometimes only accessory. There were whole rows of them on the outer wall, adding gloom to the mystery of the place, keeping death and the grave before the eyes of the living, presenting the idea of a holy city—the Mecca or Jerusalem of an unknown people.

In regard to the age of this desolate city I shall not at present offer any conjecture. Some idea might perhaps be formed from the accumulations of earth and the gigantic trees growing on the top of the ruined structures, but it would be uncertain and unsatisfactory. Nor shall I at this moment offer any conjecture in regard to the people who built it; or to the time when or the means by which it was depopulated to become a desolation and ruin; or as to whether it fell by the sword, or famine, or pestilence. The trees which shroud it may have sprung from the blood of its slaughtered inhabitants; they may have perished howling with hunger; or pestilence, like the cholera, may have piled its streets with the dead and driven forever the feeble remnants from their homes. Of such dire calamities to other cities we have authentic accounts, in eras both prior and subsequent to the discovery of the country by the Spaniards.

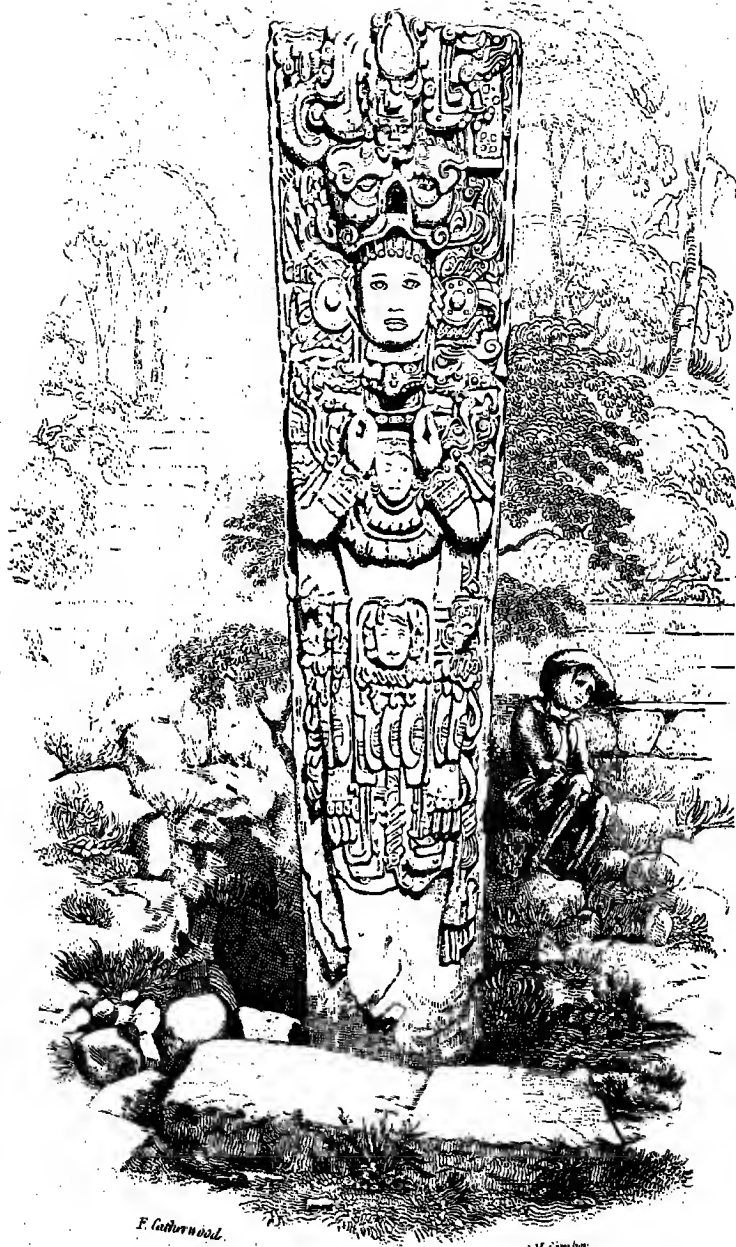












*F. Gathwood.*

*S. H. Chamber.*

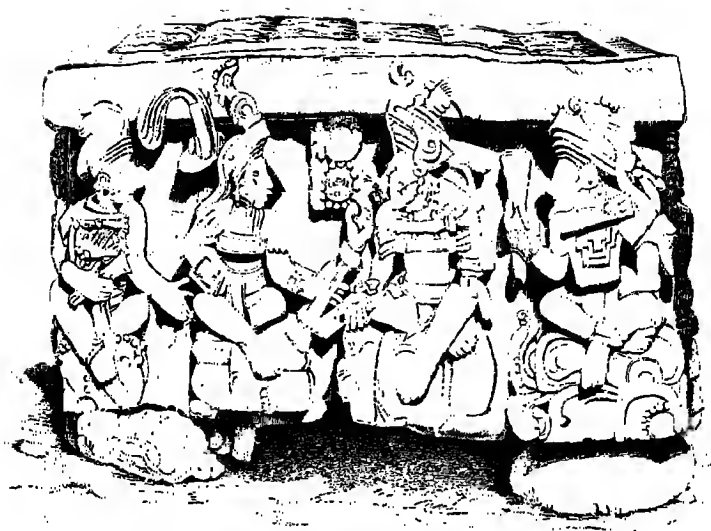


FIG. 13 *Stone Altar at Copán*—west and north sides

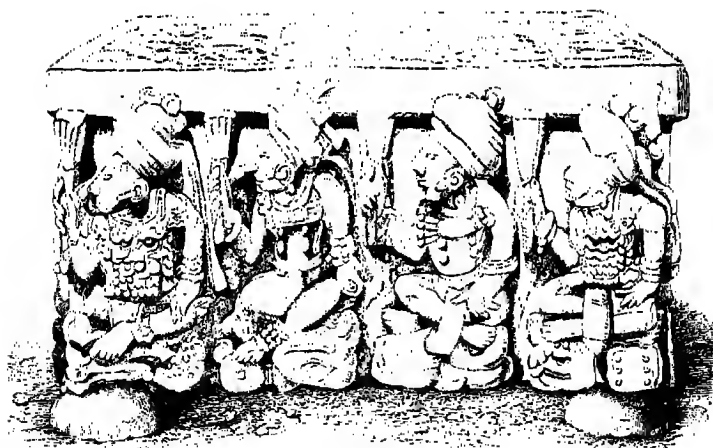
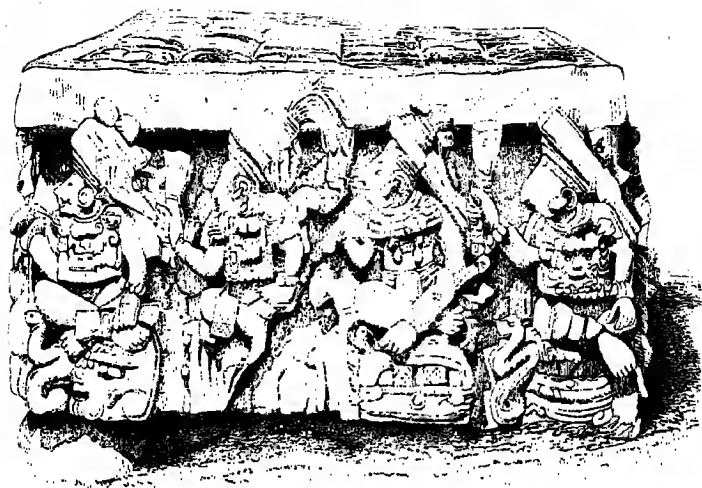
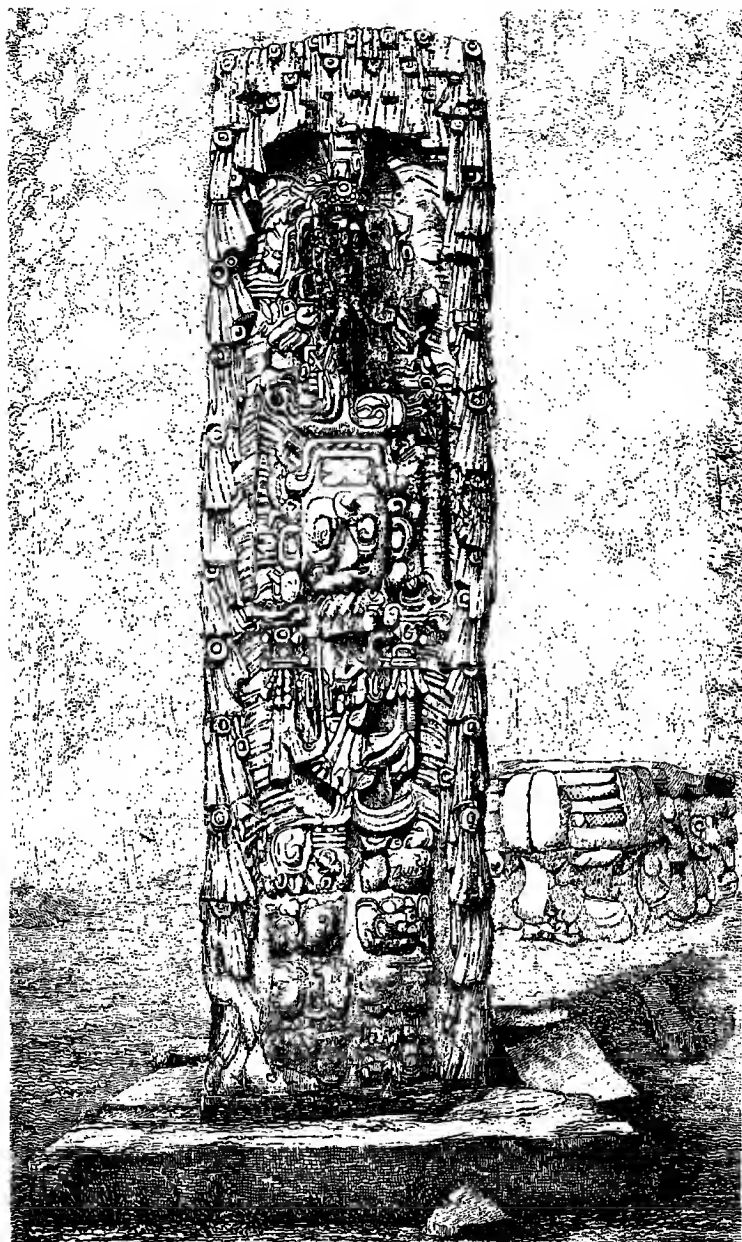
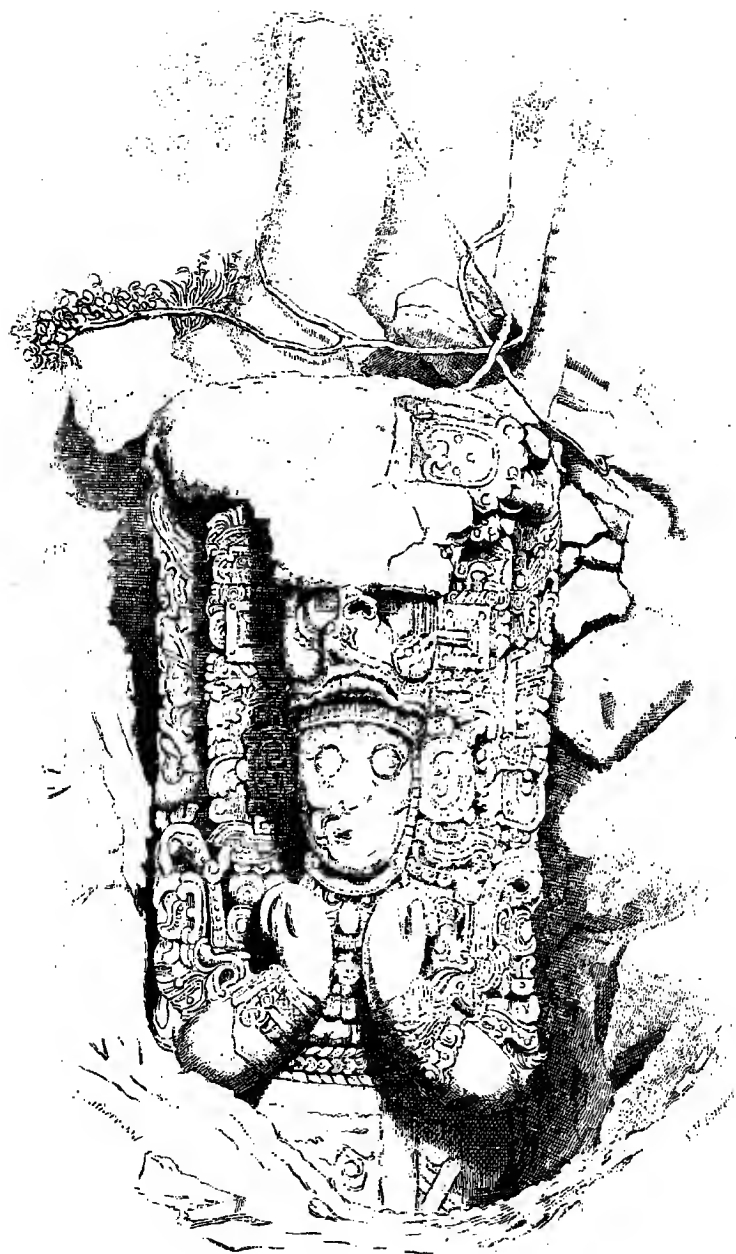
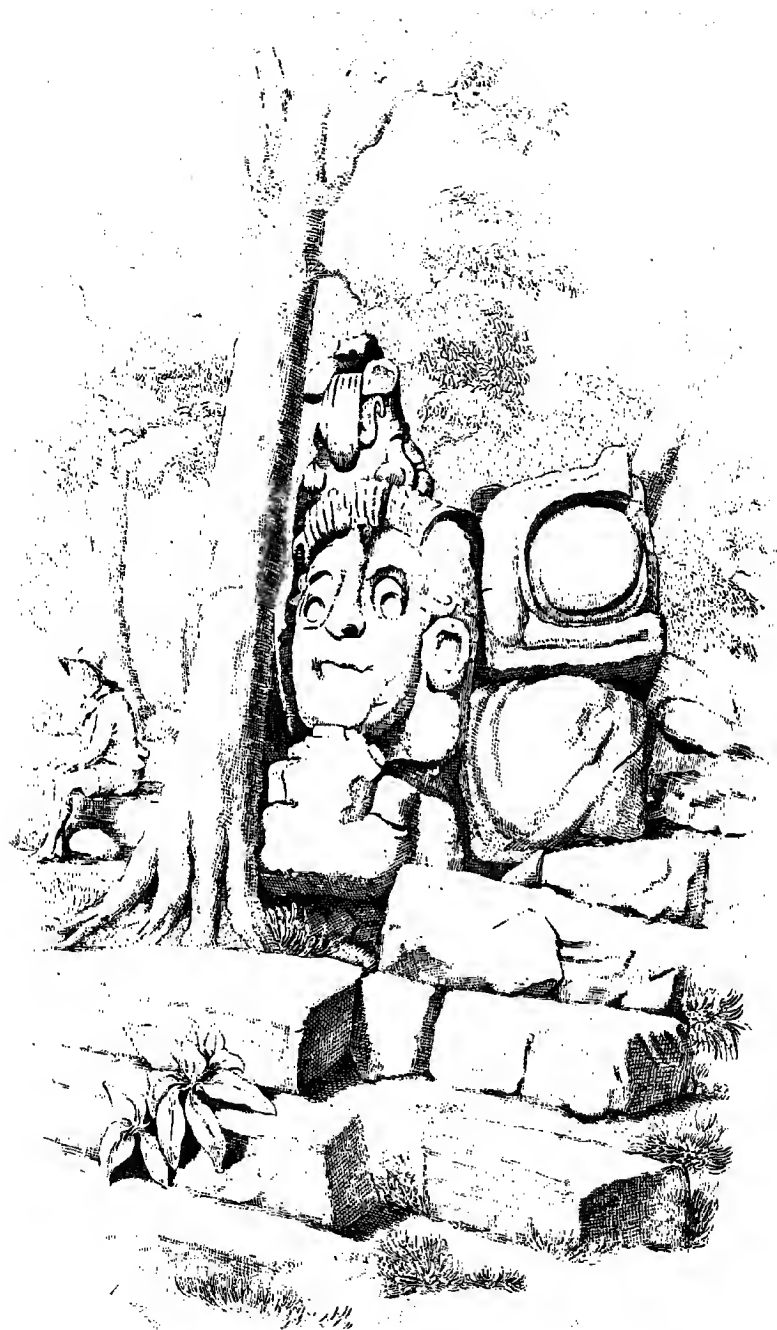


FIG. 14 *Stone Altar at Copán*—south and east sides

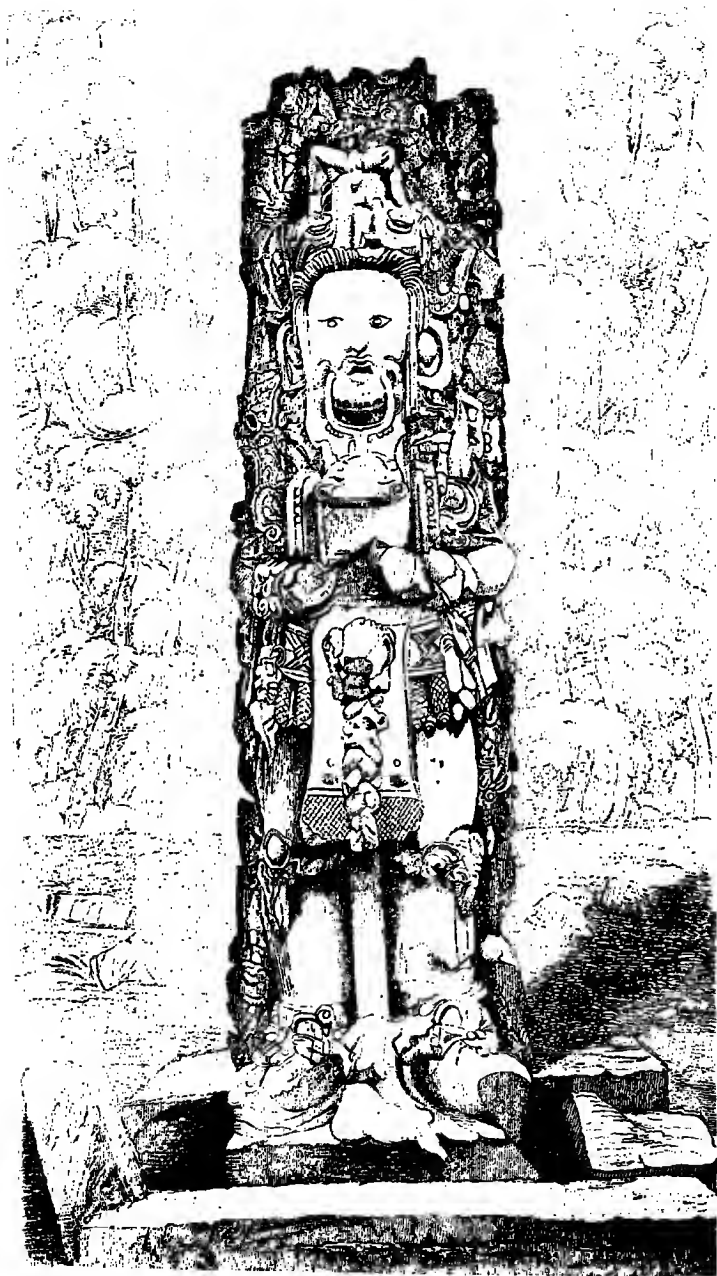


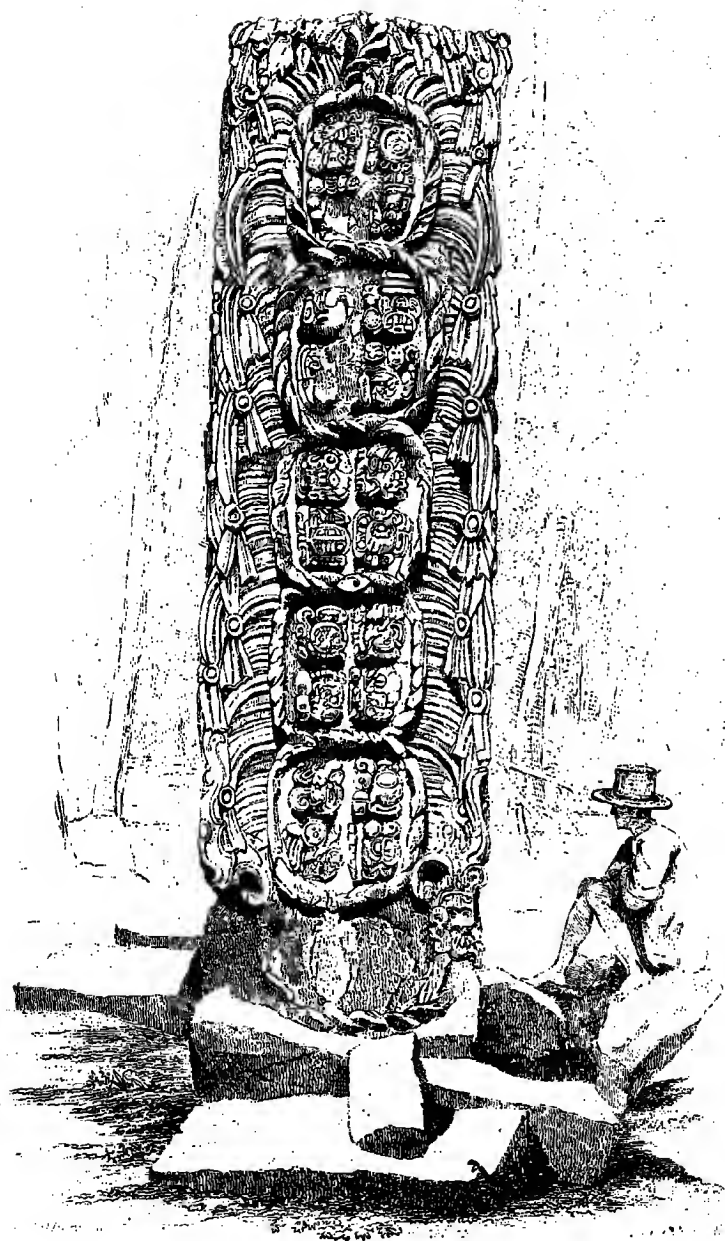


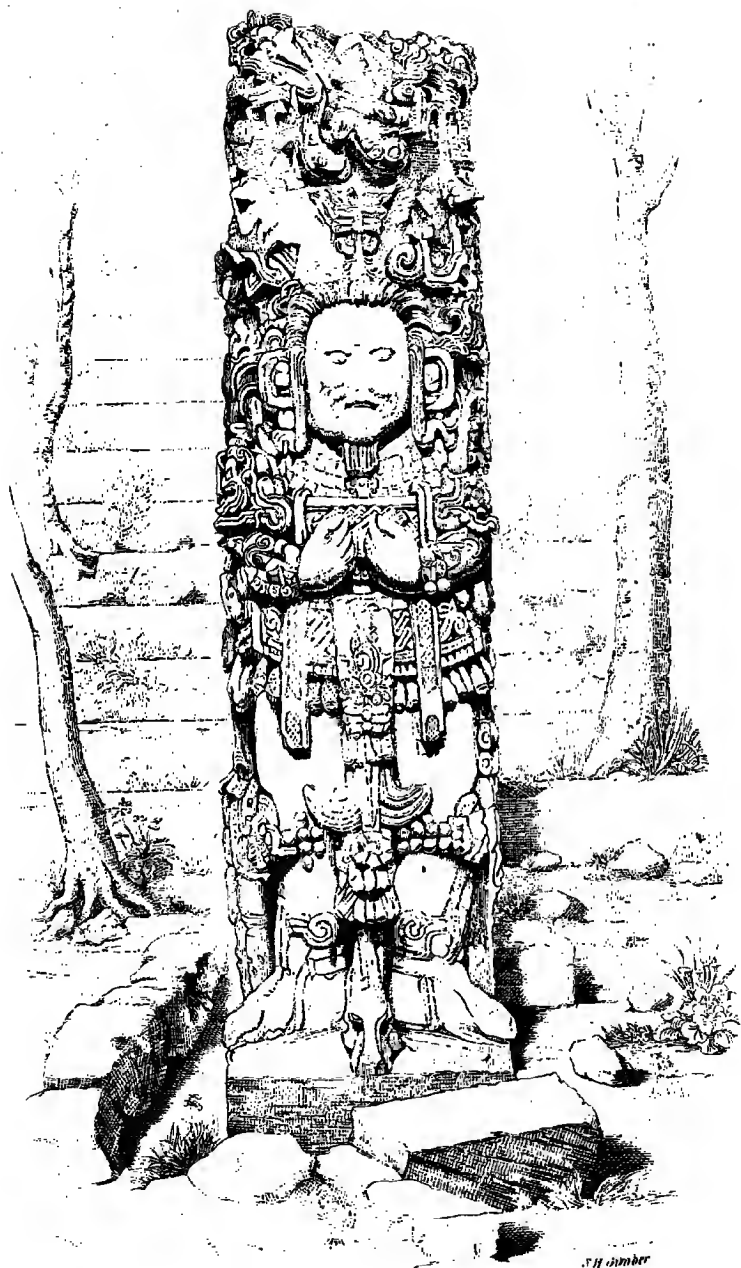












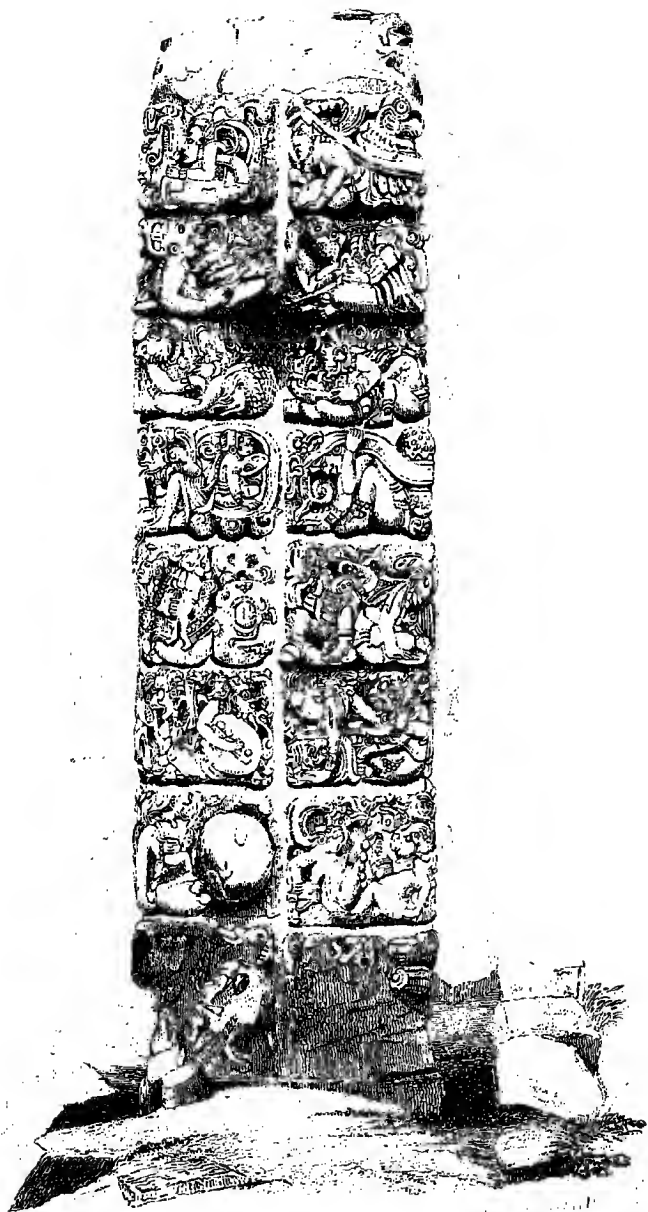
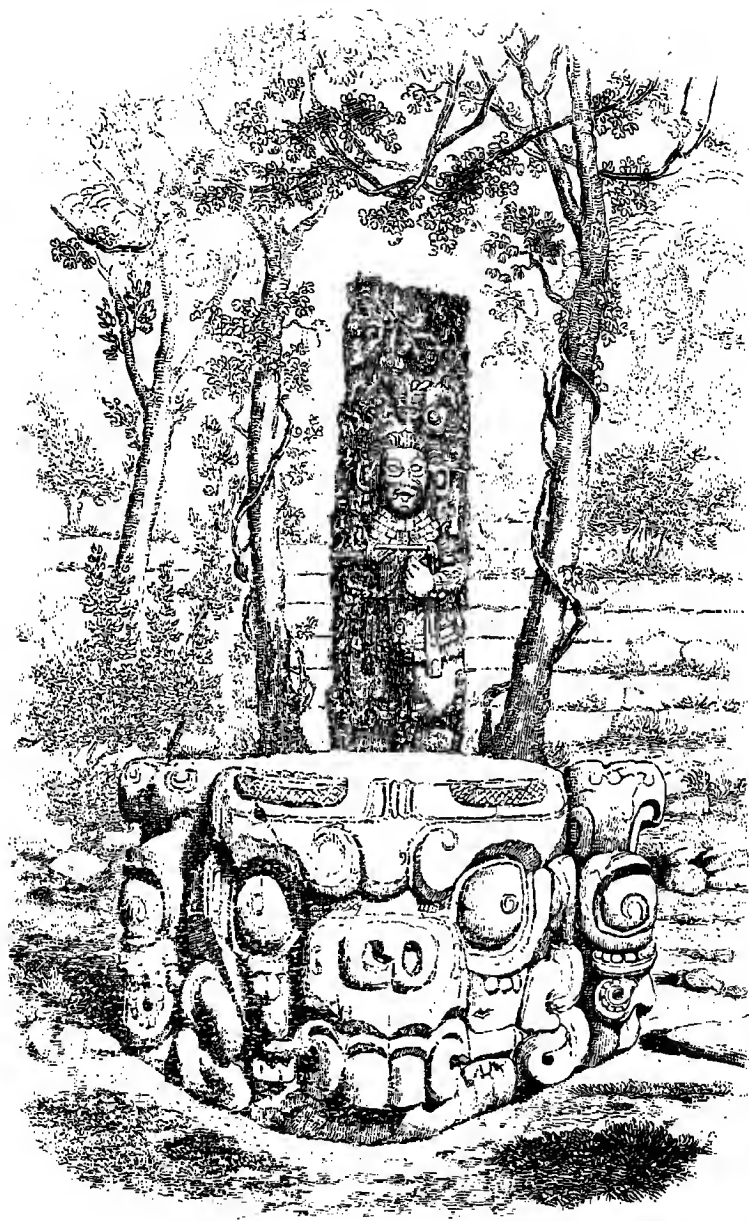


FIG. 22. Stone Idol P at Copán—back view



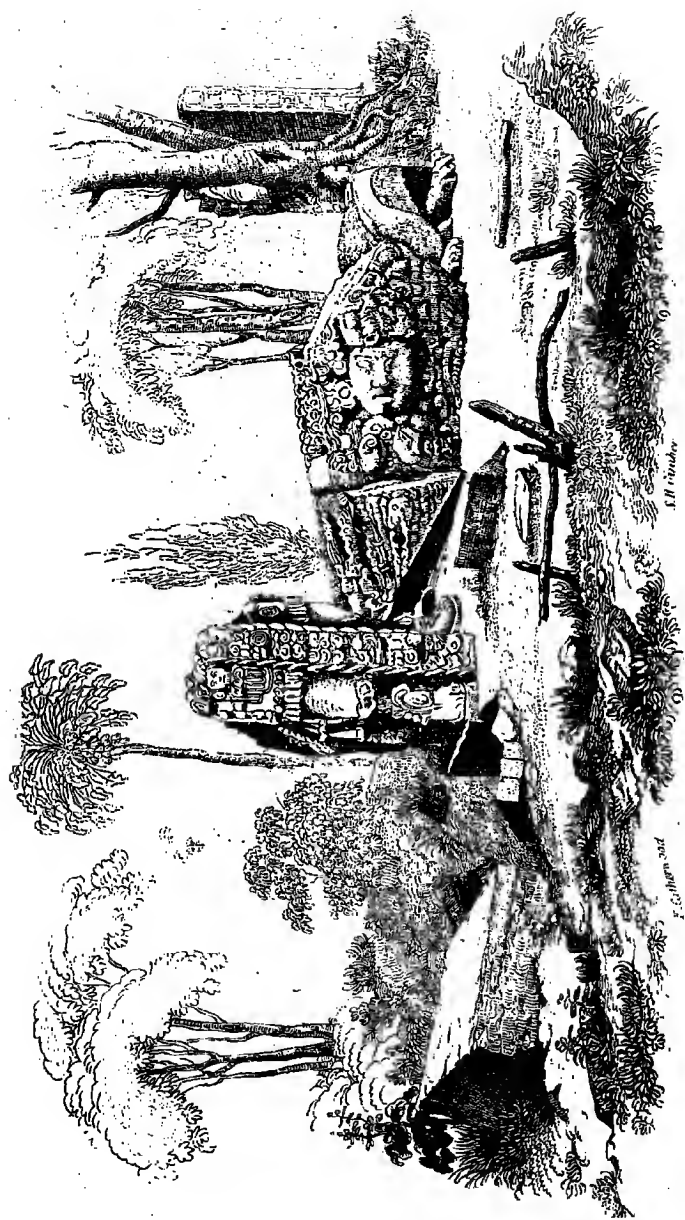


FIG. 24 Fallen Stone Idol O at Copán



FIG. 25. Stone Idol N at Copán—front view

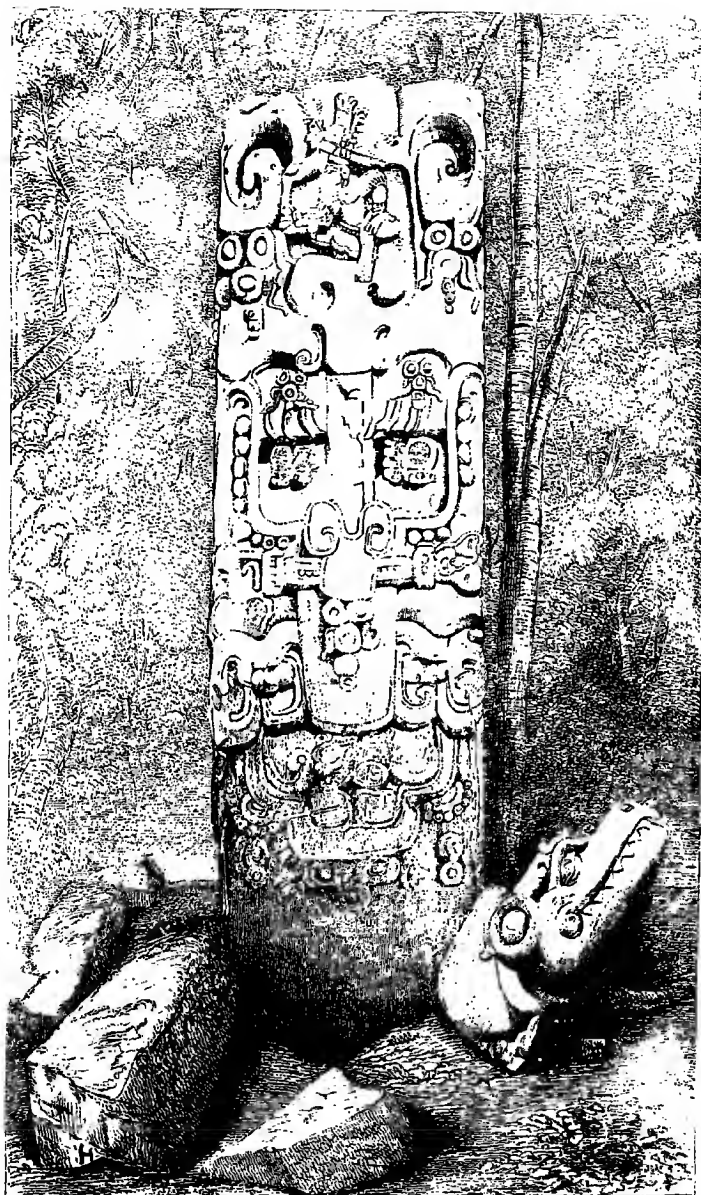
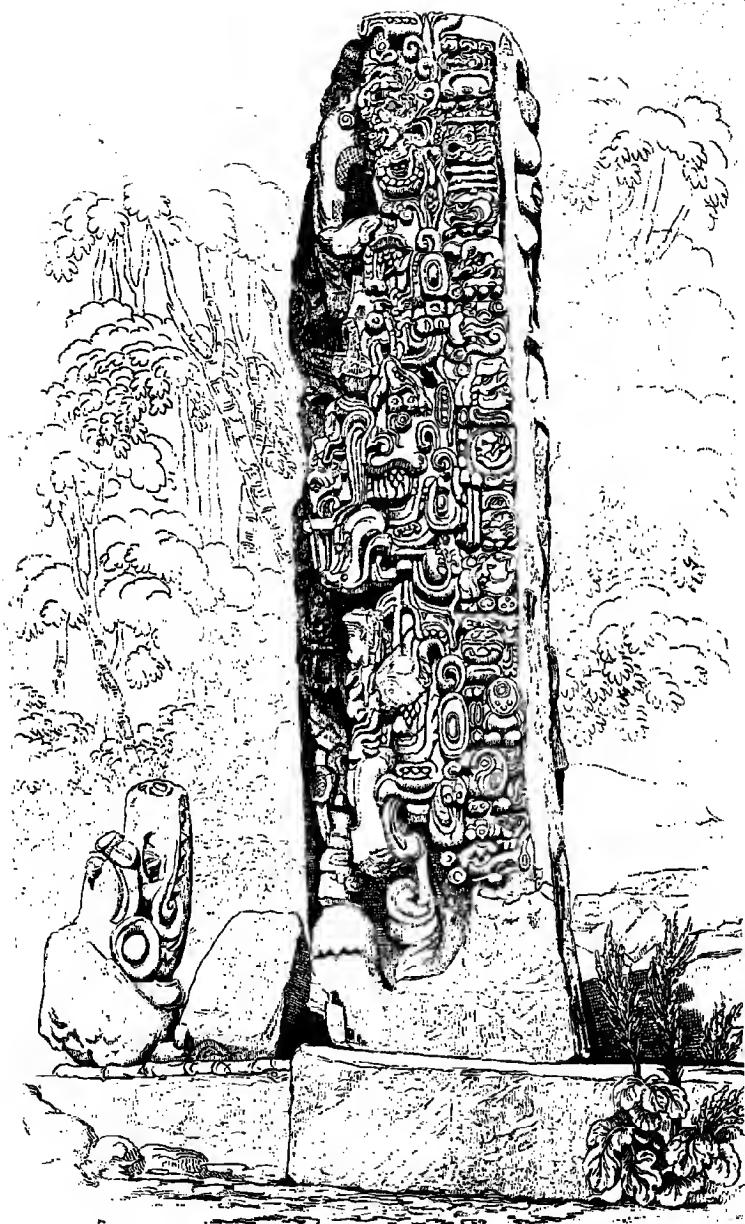


FIG. 26 *Stone Idol N at Copán—back view*





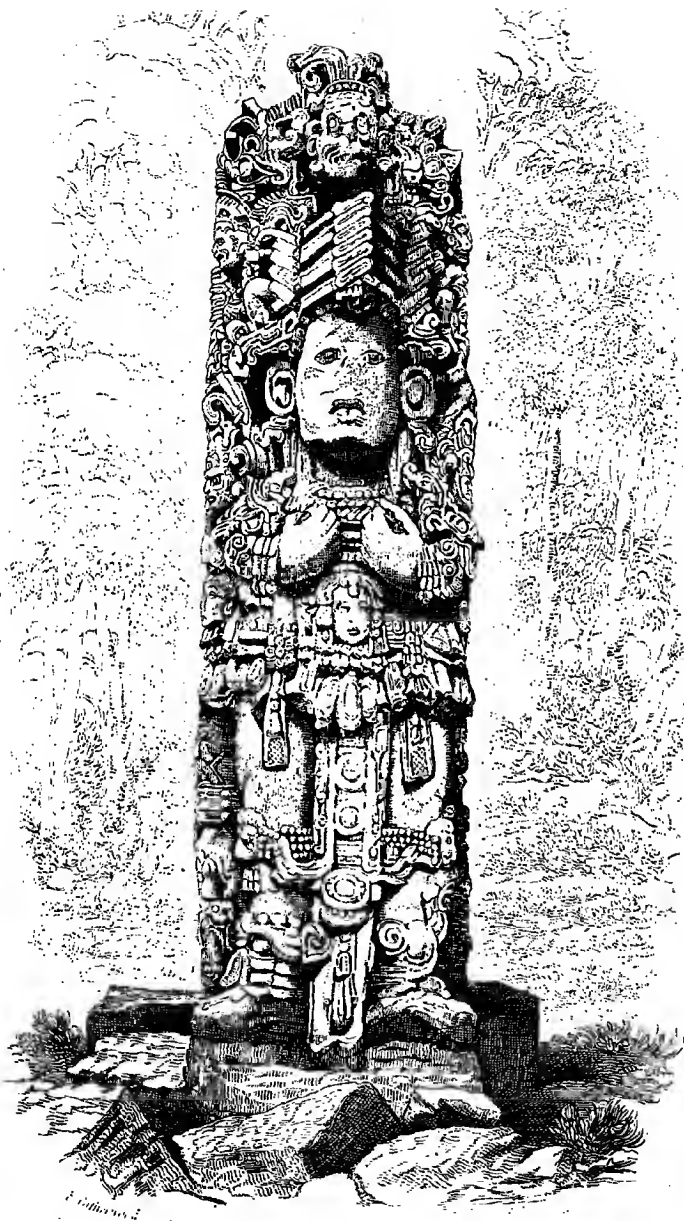
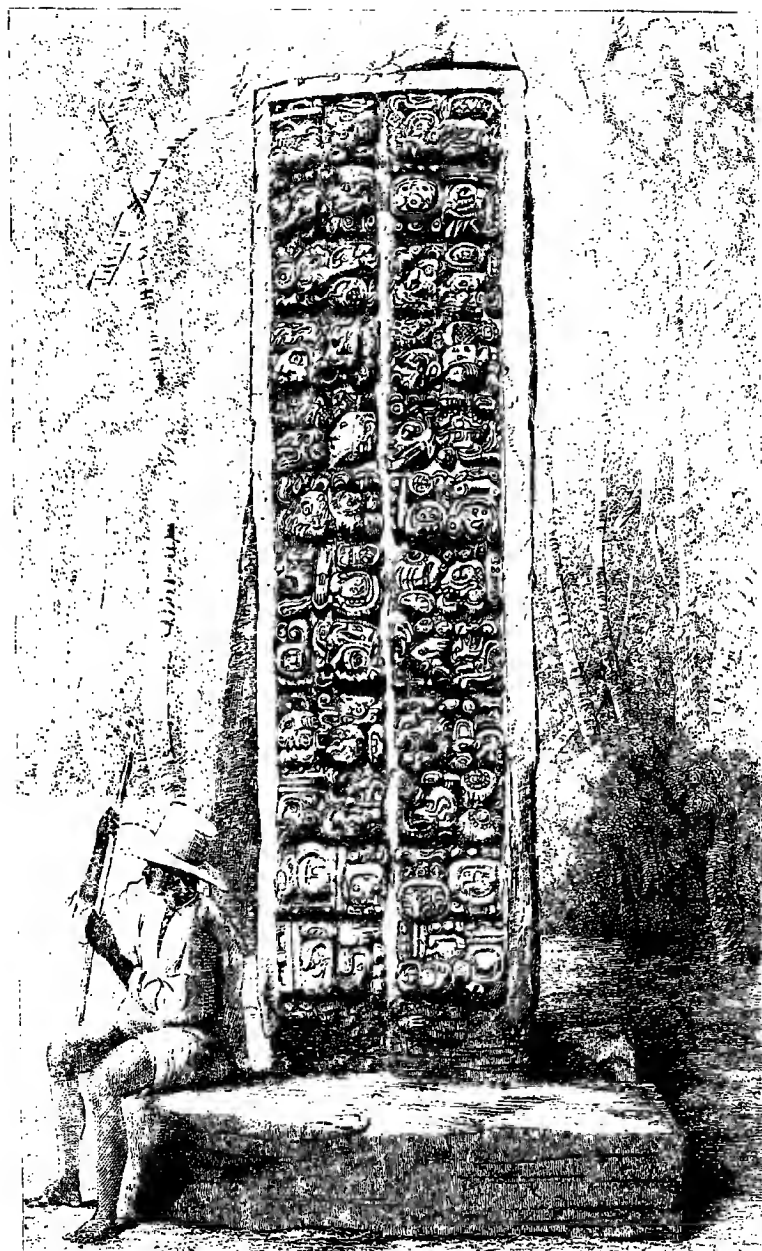


FIG. 62 Stone Idol I. at Copán—front view



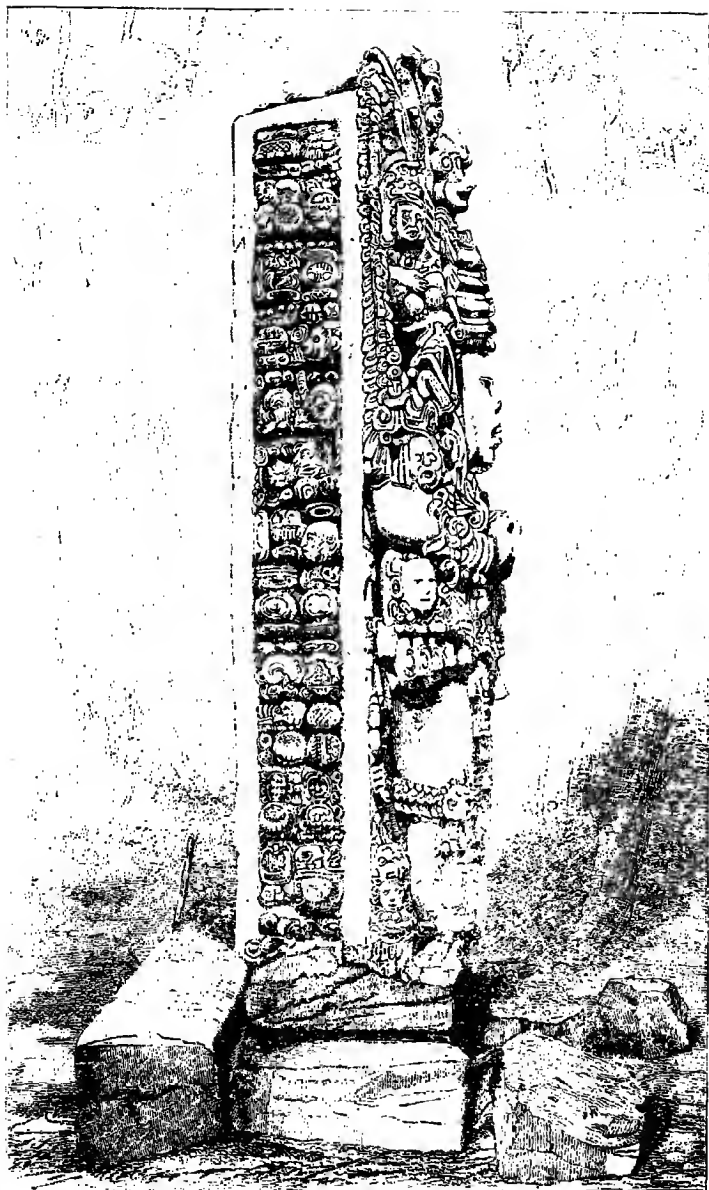


FIG. 30 *Stone Idol I. at Copán—side view*

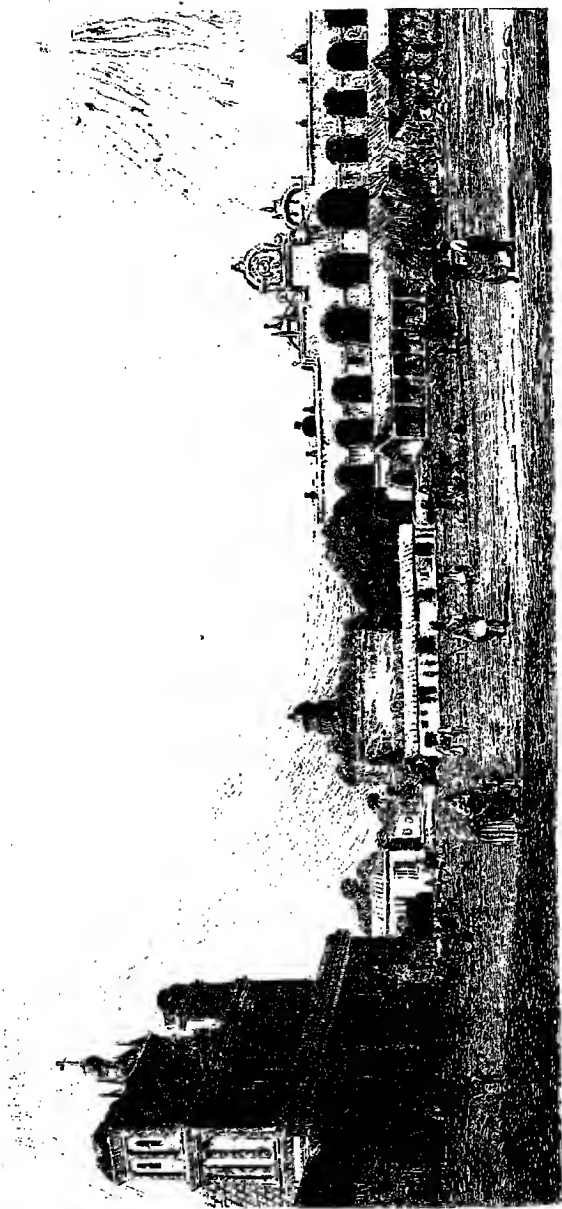


FIG. 31 *Great Square of Antigua Guatemala*

One thing I believe: its history is graven on its monuments. No Champollion<sup>7</sup> has yet brought to them the energies of his inquiring mind. Who shall read them?

*Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,  
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,  
And say 'here was or is,' where all is doubly night?*

In conclusion, I will barely remark, that if this is the place referred to by the Spanish historian as that conquered by Hernando de Chávez (which I almost doubt), at that time its broken monuments, terraces, pyramidal structures, portals, walls, and sculptured figures were entire, and all were painted. The Spanish soldiers must have gazed at them with astonishment and wonder, and it seems strange that a European army could have entered the city without spreading its fame through the official reports of generals and exaggerated stories of soldiers; at least, no European army could enter such a city now without this result following. But the silence of the Spaniards may be accounted for by the fact that these conquerors of America were illiterate and ignorant adventurers, eager in pursuit of gold, and blind to everything else. Or, if reports were made, the Spanish government, with a jealous policy observed down to the last moment of her dominion, could have suppressed everything that might attract the attention of rival nations to her American possessions.

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7. The French archeologist who deciphered the Egyptian hieroglyphics (1788-1867).

## Chapter VIII



*Separation. An adventure. Copán River. Don Clementino. A wedding. A supper. A wedding ball. Buying a mule. The Sierra. View from the top. Esquipulas. The cura. Hospitable reception. Church of Esquipulas. Responsibility of the cura. Mountain of Quezaltepeque. A narrow escape. San Jacinto. Reception by the padre. A village fête. An ambushade. Motagua River. Village of Santa Rosalia. A death scene.*

HAVING decided that under the circumstances it was best to separate, we lost no time in acting upon the conclusion. I had difficulty in coming to a right understanding with my muleteer, but at length a treaty was established. The mules were loaded and at two o'clock I mounted. Mr. Catherwood accompanied me to the edge of the woods where I bade him farewell and left him to difficulties worse than we had apprehended. I passed through the village, crossed the river, and, leaving the muleteer on the bank, rode to the hacienda of Don Gregorio; but I was deprived of the satisfaction which I had promised myself at parting of pouring upon him my indignation and contempt, by the consideration that Mr. Catherwood was still within the reach of his influence. And even now my hand is stayed by the reflection that when Mr. Catherwood, in great distress, robbed by his servant and broken down by fever, took refuge in his house, the don received him as kindly as his bearish nature would permit. My only comfort was in making the lordly churl foot up the account of sixpences and shillings for eggs, milk, meat, etc., to the amount of two dollars, which I put into his hands. I afterward learned that I had elevated myself

very much in his estimation, and in that of the neighborhood generally, by my handsome conduct in not going off without paying.<sup>1</sup>

My good understanding with the muleteer was of short duration. At parting, Mr. Catherwood and I had divided our stock of plates, knives and forks, spoons, etc., and Augustin had put my share in the basket which had carried the whole. Being loose, they made such a clattering that it frightened the mule. The beast ran away, setting us all off after her with a crashing noise, till she threw herself among the bushes. We had a scene of terrible confusion, and I escaped as fast as I could from the hoarse and croaking curses of the muleteer.

For some distance the road lay along the river. The Copán has no storied associations, but the Guadalquivir<sup>2</sup> cannot be more beautiful. On each side were mountains, and at every turn a new view. We crossed a high range, and at four o'clock again came down upon the river, which was here the boundary line of the State of Honduras. It was broad and rapid, deep, and broken by banks of sand and gravel. Forging it, I again entered the State of Guatemala. There was no village, not even a house in sight, and no difficulty about passport. Late in the afternoon, ascending a little eminence, I saw a large field, with stone fences, bars, and a cattleyard, that looked like a Westchester farm. We entered a gate and rode up through a fine park to a long, low, substantial-looking hacienda. It was the house of Don Clementino, whom I knew to be the kinsman of Don Gregorio; it was the one of all others I would have avoided, but it was also the very one at which the muleteer had determined to contrive a halt. The family consisted of a widow with a large family of children, the principal of whom were

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1. According to Mr. Stephens "On Mr. Catherwood's second visit, finding the rancho of Don Miguel deserted, he rode to Don Gregorio's. The don had in the meantime been to Esquipulas, and learned our character from the cura; and it is due to him to say, that he received Mr. Catherwood kindly, and made many inquiries after me. The rest of the family were as cordial as before."

2. A famous river in southern Spain.



Don Clementino, a young man of twenty-one, and his sister of about sixteen or seventeen, a beautiful fair-haired girl. Under the shed was a party of young people in holiday dresses; five or six mules with fanciful saddles were tied to the posts of the piazza. Don Clementino was jauntily dressed in white jacket and trousers, braided and embroidered. He wore a white cotton cap and over it a steeple-crowned glazed hat with red and yellow stripes under the brim. It had a silver cord twisted round as a band and a silver ball with a sharp piece of steel as a cockade. He had the consequential air and feelings of a boy who had suddenly become the head of an establishment. He asked me, rather superciliously, if I had finished my visit to the idols, and then, without waiting for an answer, he asked if I could mend an accordion; then, if I could play on the guitar; then, if I would sell him a pair of pocket pistols which had been the admiration of Don Gregorio's household; and, finally, if I had anything to sell. With this young gentleman, I should have been more welcome as a pedler than as an ambassador from any court in Europe, though it must be admitted that I was not traveling in a very imposing way. Finding I had nothing to make a bargain for, he picked up a guitar, danced off to his own music, and sat down on the earthen floor of the piazza to play cards.

Within, preparations were going on for a wedding at the house of a neighbor two leagues distant, and a little before the young men and girls appeared dressed for the journey. All were mounted; for the first time, I admired exceedingly the fashion of the country in riding. My admiration was called forth by the sister of Don Clementino and the happy young gallant who escorted her. Both rode the same mule and on the same saddle. She sat sideways before him, his right arm encircling her waist. At starting, the mule was restive, and to support her in her seat, he was obliged, from necessity, to draw her close to himself; her ear invited a whisper, and when she turned her face toward him her lips almost touched his. I would have given all the honors of diplomacy for his place.

Don Clementino was too much of a coxcomb to set off in this way. He had a fine mule gaily caparisoned; he swung

a large basket-hilted sword through a strap in the saddle, buckled on a pair of enormous spurs, and, mounting, wound his poncho around his waist so that the hilt of the sword appeared about six inches above it. Giving the animal a sharp thrust with his spurs, he drove her up the steps, through the piazza, and down the other side, and asked me if I wanted to buy her. I declined and, to my great satisfaction, he started to overtake the others, leaving me alone with his mother, a respectable-looking, gray-haired old lady, who called together all the servants and Indian children for vesper prayers. I am sorry to say it, but for the first time I was reminded that it was Sunday. I stood in the doorway, and it was interesting to see them all kneeling before the figure of the Virgin. An old gray-nosed mule walked up the piazza and, stopping by my side, put his head in the doorway; more forward than I, he walked in, gazed a moment at the figure of the Virgin, and, without disturbing anybody, walked out again.

Soon after I was called in to supper, which consisted of fried beans, fried eggs, and tortillas. The beans and eggs were served on heavy silver dishes, and the tortillas were laid in a pile by my side. There was no plate, knife, fork, or spoon. Fingers were made before forks, but bad habits make the latter, to a certain degree, necessary. Poultry, mutton, beef, and the like, do not come amiss to fingers, but beans and fried eggs were puzzling. How I managed I will not publish, but from appearances afterward, the old lady could not have supposed that I had been at all at a loss. I slept in an outbuilding constructed of small poles and thatched, and for the whole I paid eighteen and three-quarters cents. I gave a pair of earrings to a woman whom I supposed to be a servant, but who, I found, was only a visitor, and who went away at the same time that I did.

At a distance of two leagues from the hacienda we passed the house of the wedding party. The dancing was not yet over, and I had a strong fancy to see again the fair-haired sister of Don Clementino. Having no better excuse, I determined to call the latter out and "talk mule." As I rode up, the doorway and the space thence to the middle of the room were filled with girls, all dressed in white, with the

roses in their hair faded and the brightness of their eyes somewhat dimmed by a night's dissipation. The sister of Don Clementino was modest and retiring and, as if she suspected my object, shrank back from observation, while he made all open a way for him and his guitar. I had no idea of buying his mule, but made him an offer which, to my surprise and regret at the time, he accepted; but virtue is its own reward, and the mule proved a most faithful animal.

Mounted on my new purchase, we commenced ascending the great Sierra, which divides the streams of the Atlantic from those that empty into the Pacific Ocean. The ascent was rugged and toilsome, but in two hours we reached the top. That the scenery was wild and grand, I have no doubt, but the fact is, it rained very hard all the time; while I was floundering among mudholes I would have given the chance of the sublime for a good macadamized road. Mr. Catherwood, who crossed on a clear day, says that the view from the top, in both directions, was the most magnificent he saw in the country. Descending, the clouds were lifted, and I looked down upon an almost boundless plain running from the foot of the Sierra, and afar off saw, standing alone in the wilderness, the great church of Esquipulas, like the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, and the Caaba in Mecca, the holiest of temples. My muleteer was very anxious to stop at a collection of huts on this side of the town, and he told me first that the town was occupied by Carrera's soldiers, and then that he was ill. I had a long and magnificent descent to the foot of the Sierra. The plain reminded me of the great waste places of Turkey and Asia Minor, but was more beautiful, being bounded by immense mountains. For three hours the church was our guide. As we approached, it stood out more clearly defined against mountains whose tops were buried in the clouds.

Late in the afternoon we entered the town and rode up to the convent. I was a little nervous, but presented my passport as a letter of introduction. But could I have doubted the hospitality of a padre? Don Gregorio's reception made me feel more deeply the welcome of the cura of

Esquipulas. None can know the value of hospitality but those who have felt the want of it, and they can never forget the welcome of strangers in a strange land.

The whole household of the cura turned out to assist, and in a few minutes the mules were munching corn in the yard, while I was installed in the seat of honor in the convent. It was by far the largest and best building in the place. The walls were three or four feet thick. A large portico extended in front; the entrance was by a wide hall, which was used as a sleeping place for servants and which communicated with a courtyard in the rear. On the left was a large *sala*, or reception room, with lofty windows and deep recesses; on one side of the wall was a long wooden settee, with a high back and arms at each end, before which was a massive unpolished mahogany table above which hung a painting of our Saviour. Against the wall were large antiquated chairs, the backs and seats covered with leather and studded with nails having large brass heads.

The cura was a young man under thirty, of delicate frame; his face beamed with intelligence and refinement of thought and feeling. He was dressed in a long black bombazet gown, drawn tight around the body, with a blue border around the neck, and from his cross was suspended his rosary. His name was *Jesús* María Gutiérrez. It was the first time I had ever heard that name applied to a human being, and even in respect to him it seemed a profanation.

On a visit to him and breaking the monotony of his secluded life, was an old schoolfellow and friend, Colonel San Martín of Honduras, who, having been wounded in the last battle against Morazán, was staying at the convent to recover his health and strength. His case showed the distracted state of the country; his father was of the same politics as himself, but his brother had been fighting on the other side in the battle in which the Colonel had been wounded.

They gave me disagreeable information in regard to my road to Guatemala. Carrera's troops had fallen back from the frontiers of El Salvador and now occupied the whole

line of villages to the capital. They were mostly Indians, ignorant, intemperate, and fanatic, who could not comprehend my official character, could not read my passport, and, in the excited state of the country, would suspect me as a stranger. They had already committed great atrocities; there was not a curate on the whole road, and to attempt traversing it would be to expose myself to robbery and murder. I was very loth to protract my journey, but it would have been madness to proceed; in fact, no muleteer would undertake to go on with me, and I was obliged to turn my eyes to Chiquimula and the road I had left. The cura said I must be guided by him. I put myself in his hands, and at a late hour lay down to rest with the strange consciousness of being a welcome guest.

I was awakened by the sound of the matin bell, and accompanied the cura to mass. The church for everyday use was directly opposite the convent, spacious and gloomy, and the floor was paved with large square bricks or tiles. Rows of Indian women were kneeling around the altar, cleanly dressed, with white mantillas over their heads but without shoes or stockings. A few men stood up behind or leaned against the walls.

We returned to breakfast and afterward set out to visit the only object of interest, the great church of the pilgrimage, the Holy Place of Central America. Every year, on the fifteenth of January, pilgrims visit it, even from Peru and Mexico, the latter being a journey not exceeded in hardship by the pilgrimage to Mecca. As in the East "it is not forbidden to trade during the pilgrimage" and, when there are no wars to make the roads unsafe, eighty thousand people have assembled among the mountains to barter and pay homage to "our Lord of Esquipulas."

The town contains a population of about fifteen hundred Indians. There was one street nearly a mile long with mud houses on each side; but most of the houses were shut, being occupied only during the time of the fair. At the head of this street, on elevated ground, stood the great church. About halfway to it we crossed a bridge over a small stream, one of the sources of the great Lempa. It was the first stream

I had seen that emptied into the Pacific Ocean, and I saluted it with reverence. Ascending by a flight of massive stone steps in front of the church, we reached a noble platform a hundred and fifty feet broad and paved with bricks a foot square. The view from this platform of the great plain and the high mountains around was magnificent; and the church, rising in solitary grandeur in a region of wildness and desolation, seemed almost the work of enchantment. The façade was rich with stucco ornaments and figures of saints larger than life. At each angle was a high tower, and over the dome a spire, rearing aloft in the air the crown of that once proud power which wrested the greatest part of America from its rightful owners, ruled it for three centuries with a rod of iron, and now has not within it a foot of land or a subject to boast of.

We entered the church by a lofty portal, rich in sculptured ornaments. Inside was a nave, with two aisles separated by rows of pilasters nine feet square, and a lofty dome guarded by angels with expanded wings. On the walls were pictures, some drawn by artists of Guatemala, and others that had been brought from Spain; the recesses were filled with statues, some of which were admirably well executed. The pulpit was covered with gold leaf, and the altar was protected by an iron railing with a silver balustrade ornamented with six silver pillars about two feet high and two angels standing as guardians on the steps. In front of the altar, in a rich shrine, was an image of the Saviour on the cross, "our Lord of Esquipulas," to whom the church is consecrated, an image famed for its power of working miracles. Every year thousands of devotees ascend the steps of his temple on their knees or laden with a heavy cross; they are not permitted to touch the sacred image, but go away contented in having obtained a piece of riband stamped with the words "*Dulce nombre de Jesús.*"

We returned to the convent; while I was sitting with Colonel San Martín the curate entered and, closing the door, asked me if my servant was faithful. Augustin's face was an unfortunate letter of recommendation. Colonel MacDonald, Don Francisco, and, as I afterward heard, General

Cascara, distrusted him. I told the cura all I knew of him, and mentioned his conduct at Camotán; but he still cautioned me to beware of him. Soon after, Augustin, who seemed to suspect that he had not made a very favorable impression, asked me for a dollar to pay for a confession. My intelligent friend was not free from the prejudices of education; though he could not at once change his opinion so warmly expressed, he said that Augustin had been well brought up.

In the course of the day I had an opportunity of seeing what I afterward observed throughout all Central America: the life of labor and responsibility passed in an Indian village by the cura, who devotes himself faithfully to the people under his charge. Besides officiating in all the services of the church, visiting the sick, and burying the dead, my worthy host was looked up to by every Indian in the village as a counsellor, friend, and father. The door of the convent was always open, and Indians were constantly resorting to him: a man who had quarreled with his neighbor; a wife who had been badly treated by her husband; a father whose son had been carried off as a soldier; a young girl deserted by her lover—all who were in trouble or affliction came to him for advice and consolation, and none went away without it. And, besides this, he was principal director of all the public business of the town, the right hand of the alcalde; it was he who had been consulted as to whether or not I ought to be considered a dangerous person. But the performance of these multifarious duties, and the excitement and danger of the times, were wearing away his frame. Four years before, he gave up Guatemala City and took upon himself this curacy, and since that time he had been living a life of labor, anxiety, and peril, cut off from all the delights of social intercourse that make labor welcome. He was beloved by the Indians, but was without anyone to sympathize with him in his thoughts and feelings. Once when the troops of Morazán invaded the town he lay for six months concealed in a cave of the mountains, supported by Indians. Lately the difficulties of the country had increased, and the cloud of civil war was darker than ever. He mourned, but, as he said,

he had not long to mourn; and the whole tone of his thoughts and conversation was so good and pure that it seemed like a green spot in a sandy desert. We sat in the embrasure of a large window; within, the room was already dark. He took a pistol from the window sill and, looking at it, said with a faint smile that the cross was his protection; and then he put his thin hand in mine and told me to feel his pulse. It was slow and feeble and seemed as if every beat would be the last; but he said it was always so and, rising suddenly, added that this was the hour of his private devotions, and then retired to his room. I felt as if a good spirit had flitted away.

My anxiety to reach Guatemala would not permit me long to enjoy the cura's hospitality. I intended to discharge my muleteer but, unable to replace him immediately and unwilling to lose another day, I was obliged to retain him. The usual course was to leave Esquipulas in the afternoon and ride four leagues, but, having seven mules and only four cargoes, I determined to make these four leagues and the next day's journey also that same day. Early in the morning I started. When I bade farewell, the priest and the soldier stood side by side, pictures of Christian humility and man's pride; both recommended me to God at parting.

As we crossed the plain the mountains of Esquipulas seemed to have gained in grandeur. In half an hour we commenced to ascend the Mountain of Quezaltepeque, which was thickly wooded and, like Mico Mountain, muddy and full of gullies and deep holes. Heavy clouds were hanging over it, and as we ascended, it rained hard; but before we reached the top the clouds were lifted, the sun shone, and the plain of Esquipulas, with the great Sierra behind it covered with lofty pines and clouds chasing each other over its sides, all blended together, made one of the grandest spectacles I ever beheld; and the great church still presented itself for the farewell view of the pilgrim. But the gleam of sunshine did not last long, and again the rain poured. For a while I had great satisfaction in seeing the muleteer drenched and in hearing him grumble, but an unaccountable fit of good humor came over me, and I lent him



my bear's skin greatcoat. At intervals the sun shone, and we saw at a great distance below us the village of Quezaltepeque. The descent was very precipitous, and the mudholes and gullies were very deep; the clouds which hung over the mountain were typical of my fortune. Mr. Catherwood, who followed on this road about three weeks afterward, heard from the padre of Quezaltepeque that a plan had been formed to murder and rob me on the supposition that I had a large amount of money about my person, which laudable project was defeated by my crossing in the morning instead of in the afternoon as is usually done.

We passed through Quezaltepeque without dismounting. It is usual, in dividing the stages to Guatemala City, to make an afternoon's journey to this place and sleep. It was now but eleven o'clock, clear and bright as a September day at home. Leaving the village, we crossed a beautiful stream, at which some women were washing. Very soon we ascended again, and on the top of the mountain came to an abrupt precipice, forming the side of a deep ravine. We descended by a narrow path on the very edge of the precipice, part of the way on a narrow protruding ledge, and in other places by a path built against the rock to the bottom of the ravine. On the other side rose another precipitous wall. The ravine was deep and narrow and wild to sublimity. The stream ran through it over a rocky bed, and for some distance the road lay in this bed. We ascended by a steep and difficult path to the top of the other side of the ravine and rode for some distance along its edge. The opposite side was a perpendicular mass of limestone rock, black with exposure; in some places were patches of grass on a brown ground, lighted up occasionally by brief gleams of sunshine. We descended again to the very bottom of the ravine and, crossing the stream, ascended almost immediately a narrow path built along the side of the precipice to the top and on the same side of the river from which we started. It is impossible to give any idea of the wildness of this double crossing of the ravine. It terminated abruptly, and on a point at the extreme end was a small hacienda, on one side looking

directly up this awful opening and on the other upon a soft valley.

At three o'clock we struck the *riachuelo* of San Jacinto. On the opposite side was a fine table of land, with mountains rising beyond, which was covered to the top with noble pines. There was no cultivation, and the whole country was in primeval wildness. At five o'clock we crossed the stream and entered the village of San Jacinto. It consisted of a collection of huts, some made of poles and some plastered with mud. The church was of the same simple construction. On each side was an arbor thatched with leaves of Indian corn, and at the corners were belfries with three bells each. In front were two gigantic ceiba trees; the roots ran along even with the ground more than a hundred feet and the branches spread to an equal extent.

The village was under the care of the cura of Quezaltepeque, who was then at San Jacinto. I rode up to his house and presented the letter of the cura of Esquipulas. My muleteer, without unloading the mules, threw himself down on the piazza and, with my greatcoat on his unthankful body, began abusing me for killing him with long marches. I retorted, and before the padre had time to recover from his surprise at our visit, he was confounded by our clamor.

But he was a man who could bear a great deal, being about six feet, broad-shouldered, and with a protuberance in front that required support to keep it from falling. His dress consisted of a shirt and a pair of pantaloons with buttonholes begging for employment. But he had a heart as big as his body and as open as his wearing apparel; and when I told him I had ridden from Esquipulas that day, he said I must remain a week to recruit. As to going on the next day, he would not hear of it; in fact, very soon I found that it would be impossible without other aid, for my abominable muleteer filled up the measure of his iniquities by falling ill with a violent fever.

At my earnest solicitation, the padre endeavored to procure me mules for the next day, and during the evening we had a levee of villagers. The man upon whom he principally

relied said that it was dangerous traveling, that two *ingleses* had been arrested in Honduras and although they had escaped, their muleteers and servants had been murdered. I could perhaps have thrown some light upon this story, but did not think it worth while to know anything about such suspicious characters. The padre was distressed that he could not serve me, but at length he said that a man of my rank and character (I had shown him my passport, and Augustin had fired the Belize guns) ought to have every facility, and he would provide for me himself. He ordered a man to go early in the morning to his hacienda for mules; then, fatigued with such unusual efforts, he threw his gigantic body into a hammock, and swung himself to sleep.

The household of the padre consisted of two young men, one deaf and dumb, and the other a fool. The former possessed extraordinary vivacity and muscular powers and entertained the padre by his gesticulations, stories, and sleight-of-hand tricks, and particularly with a steel puzzle. There was something intensely interesting in the kindness with which the padre played with him and the earnestness with which he hung around his gigantic master. At times the young man became so excited that it seemed as if he would burst in the effort to give utterance to his thoughts, but all ended in a feeble sound, which grated upon my nerves yet seemed to knit him more closely to the goodhearted padre. The latter was continually changing the puzzle, but the ingenuity of the lad could not be defeated. The poor simpleton meanwhile looked on with admiration. The padre offered him half a dollar if he could open it, and both he and the deaf and dumb lad laughed at the awkward attempts of the simpleton. The padre finished with a warm panegyric upon the worth of both, which the deaf and dumb boy seemed to understand and thank him for, but which he that had ears seemed not to hear.

The padre insisted on my taking his own *catre*, which was unusually neat and had a mosquito netting. It was my best bed since I left Colonel MacDonald's at Belize. Before I was up he stood over me with a flask of *aguardiente*; soon after came chocolate with a roll of sweet bread. Finding that

it was impossible to get away that day, I became a willing victim to his hospitality. At nine o'clock we had breakfast; at twelve, fruit; at two, dinner; at five, chocolate and sweet bread; and at eight, supper, with constant intermediate invitations to *aguardiente*, which the padre, with his hand on that prominent part of his own body, said was good for the stomach. In everything except good feeling he was the complete antipodes of the cura of Esquipulas. I had had some suspicion that my muleteer was not as unwell as he pretended, but his neglect of the padre's good fare convinced me that he was really in a bad way. I gave him some medicine, but I believe he suspected me and was afraid to take it.

At twelve o'clock the mules sent for by the padre arrived with a strapping young ladino, or mestizo, as muleteer; but they were not in a condition to set off that day. In the afternoon I took a long walk on the bank of the river. On returning, I stopped under the ceiba trees, where a traveling merchant was displaying his wares, consisting of two trunks of striped cottons, beads, horn combs, scissors, etc. His mule was tied by a long rope, and a pair of pistols lay on one of the boxes.

Passing on, I met a party of women dressed in white with red shawls over the tops of their heads. I have seen enough of fancy colors in women to remove some prejudices, but I retain an old-fashioned predilection for white faces, and here I remarked that the whitest women were the prettiest, though the padre did not agree with me entirely. Under the shed of a deserted house near by was an old Indian with ten or twelve Indian girls; he was teaching them the catechism. They were dressed in red plaid cotton, drawn round the waist and tied in a knot on the left side, with a white handkerchief over the shoulders. Other parties were out in different places organizing for a village fête in honor of some saint. Toward evening, while sitting with the padre, now dressed in his long black gown, a procession advanced, headed by the oldest man in the village with white hair and beard, and a lame man and two or three associates playing on violins. Before reaching the house they set off five or six rockets, and then all went up and saluted the padre, kissing

the back of his hand. The women went inside, carrying bundles wrapped in clean white napkins; and when I went in to take my chocolate, I found the table piled up with cakes and confectionery. Afterward all went to the church for vesper prayers. I could but think what afterward impressed itself upon me more and more in every step of my journey in that country, that blessed is the village that has a padre.

During the day, the deaf and dumb boy had contrived several times to make me understand that he wished to accompany me, and in the evening the padre concluded to make him happy by giving him a journey to Guatemala City. Early in the morning the convent was in commotion. The good padre was unused to fitting out an expedition for Guatemala City. Many things were wanting besides the mules, and the village was laid under contribution. During the bustle, a single soldier entered the village and created an alarm that he was the pioneer of others come to quarter upon them. The padre told him who I was, and that the guard must not molest me. At length all was ready; a large concourse of people, roused by the requisitions of the padre, were at the door, and among them were two men with violins. The padre directed his own gigantic energies particularly to the eatables; he had put up chocolate, bread, sausages, and fowl, and a box of cakes and confectionery. As the finale, the deaf and dumb lad came out of the house, holding at arm's length above his head the whole side of an ox with merely the skin taken off and the ribs cracked. It was spread as a wrapper over one of the cargoes and secured by a netting. A large pot, with the bottom upward, was secured on the top of another cargo. The padre took a kind leave of me, and a most affectionate one of the deaf and dumb lad; at nine o'clock, with violins playing and a turnout that would have astonished my city friends, I made another start for the capital. A low groan from the piazza reminded me of my muleteer. I dismounted and, at the moment of parting, exchanged a few words of kindness with him. His brawny figure was prostrated by fever; at times he had vexed me almost beyond endurance, but, with all my malice

against him, I could not have wished him in a worse condition. The boy sat by his side, apparently softened by the illness of his master and indifferent as to my going.

For the first time in a long while we had a level road. The land was rich and productive: brown sugar sold for three cents a pound and white lump sugar, even under their slow process of making it, for eight cents; indigo could be raised for two shillings a pound. I was riding quietly when four soldiers sprang into the road almost at my mule's head. They were perfectly concealed until I approached, and their sudden appearance was rather footpad-like. They could not read my passport and said that they must conduct me to Chiquimula. My road lay a little off from that town but, fortunately, while under escort, the soldier whom I had seen in San Jacinto overtook us, satisfied them, and released me. A short distance beyond I recognized the path by which we had turned off to go to Copán; three weeks had not elapsed, yet it seemed an age. We passed by the old church of Chiquimula and, winding up the same zigzag path by which we had descended, we crossed the mountain and descended to the plain of Zacapa and the Motagua River, which I hailed as an old acquaintance. It was growing late, and we saw no signs of habitation. A little before dark, on the top of a small eminence on the right, we saw a little boy, who conducted us to the village of Santa Rosalía, beautifully situated on a point formed by the bend of the river. The village consisted of a miserable collection of huts; before the door of the best was a crowd of people, but they did not ask us to stop, and we rode up to one of the poorest. All we wanted was *zacate*<sup>3</sup> for the mules. The stores of the padre were abundant for me, and the deaf and dumb lad cut a few ribs from the side of the ox and prepared supper for himself and the muleteer.

While supping we heard a voice of lamentation from the house before which the crowd was assembled. After dark I walked over and found that they were mourning over the

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3. Stephens explains that "*Zacate* means any kind of grass or leaves for mules. The best is *zacate de maíz*, or the stalks and leaves of Indian corn."

dead. Inside were several women; one was wringing her hands, and the first words I distinguished were, "Oh, our Lord of Esquipulas, why have you taken him away?" She was interrupted by the tramp of horses' hoofs. A man rode up, whose figure in the dark I could not see, but who, without dismounting, in a hoarse voice said that the priest asked six dollars to bury the corpse. One of the crowd cried out "Shame! shame!" and others said they would bury it in *el campo*, the field. The horseman, in the same hoarse voice, said that it would be the same if it were buried in the road, the mountain, or the river—the priest must have his fee. There was a great outcry; but the widow, in a weeping tone, declared that the money must be paid, and then she renewed her exclamations: "My only help, my consolation, my head, my heart, you who were so strong, who could lift a seroon of indigo, you said you would go and buy cattle; I said, 'yes; bring me fine linen and jewelry.' " The words and the piercing tone of distress reminded me of a similar scene I had once beheld on the banks of the Nile. By invitation of one of the friends I entered the house. The corpse lay on the ground in a white cotton dress extending from the neck to the feet. It was that of a young man, not more than twenty-two, with the mustache just budding on his upper lip, tall, and but a month before so strong that he could "lift a seroon of indigo." He had left home to buy cattle and had returned with a fever; in a week he was dead. A bandage was tied under his chin to hold up his jaw, his thin wrists were secured across his breast, and his taper fingers held a small crucifix made of corn husks stitched together. On each side of his head was a lighted candle, and ants, which burden the ground, were swarming over his face. The widow did not notice me, but the mother and two young sisters asked me if I had no *remedios*, if I could not cure him, if I could have cured him if I had seen him before.

I left the bereaved family and withdrew. The man who had asked me to enter met me at the door and gave me a seat among the friends. He inquired about my country—where it was, and whether the customs were like theirs—and very soon, but for the lamentations of the widow, many

would have forgotten that a few yards from them lay a dead friend.

I remained with them an hour and then returned to my hut. The piazza was full of hogs; the interior was a perfect piggery, full of fleas and children; and the woman, with a cigar in her mouth, and the harshest voice I ever heard, still brought in child after child and piled them up on the floor. My men were already asleep outside and, borrowing an undressed ox hide, I spread it on the floor at the end of the house; upon this I laid my *pellón*,<sup>4</sup> and upon that I laid myself. The night before I had slept under a mosquito netting! Oh, padre of San Jacinto, that a man of my "rank and character" should come to this! The woman was sleepless; a dozen times she came out to smoke a cigar or to drive away the hogs; and her harsh voice, and the screams from the house of mourning, made me rejoice when the cocks crew for morning.

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4. Fur robe.



## Chapter IX

*Chimalapa. The cabildo. A scene of revelry. Guastatoya. A hunt for robbers. Approach to Guatemala. Beautiful scenery. Volcanoes of Agua and Fuego. First view of the city. Entry into the city. First impressions. The diplomatic residence. Parties in Central America. Murder of Vice-President Flores. Political state of Guatemala. An embarrassing situation. The Constituent Assembly. Military police.*

AT peep of day I bathed in the Motagua. In the meantime the deaf and dumb boy prepared chocolate, and the corpse of the young man was borne to its final resting place. I went over to the desolate house, bade farewell to the mourners, and resumed my journey. Again we had on our right the Motagua River and the mountains of Verapaz. The road was level, but it was excessively hot and we suffered from thirst. At noon we stopped for two hours at the village of Fisioli.<sup>1</sup> Late in the afternoon we came upon a table of land covered with trees bearing a flower, which looked like apple trees in blossom; there was cactus or *tuna*, too, with branches from three to fifteen feet long. I was in advance; having been in the saddle all day and wishing to relieve my mule, I dismounted and walked. A man overtook me on horseback, who touched me by telling me that my mule was tired. The mule, unused to being led, pulled back, and my new acquaintance followed, whipping her. Remembering the fable and that I could not please everybody, I mounted again, and we rode into Chimalapa<sup>2</sup> together.

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1. At the present time, no such village exists.

2. This village is now called Cabañas.

It was a long, straggling village with a large church, but there was no cura, so I rode to the cabildo. This, besides being the town house, is a sort of caravansary, or stopping place for travelers, a remnant of Oriental usages which still existed in Spain, and which she had introduced into her former American possessions. It was a large building, situated on the plaza, plastered and whitewashed. At one end the alcalde was holding a sort of court, and at the other were the gratings of a prison. Between them was a room about thirty feet by twenty with naked walls and destitute of chair, bench, or table. The luggage was brought in, the hammock hung up, and the alcalde sent me my supper. Hearing the sound of a drum and violin, I walked to the house whence it issued, and found it crowded with men and women smoking, lounging in hammocks, dancing, and drinking *aguardiente*, in celebration of a marriage. Only the night before I had been present at a death scene. Before me now was an exhibition of disgusting revelry; when a prominent vagabond seemed disposed to pick a quarrel with me, I quietly walked back to the cabildo, shut the door, and betook myself to my hammock.

The next morning we started early. As we left the town, for some distance on each side were fences made of rails upon crotches four feet high and filled with long pieces of *tunas*. The road was the same as we had found it on the preceding day, level and abounding with cactus. Again it was desperately hot, and in the afternoon we saw at the foot of a high mountain a cluster of cocoanut trees, glittering in the sunbeams like plates of silver, which concealed the town of Guastatoya. At four o'clock we entered the town, which was beautifully situated, overlooking a valley in the rear of the square waving with Indian corn; we rode up to the house of the brother of Doña Bartola, our hostess of Gualán, who had recommended him to us.

I had a good supper of eggs, *frijoles*, chocolate, and tortillas, and was lying in a hammock with my boots off when the alcalde entered with a sword under his arm, followed by my host and several other persons. He told me that a party of robbers was out after me, that he had men on their

traces, and wished to borrow my arms and servants. The latter I was willing enough to lend, for I knew they would find their way back, but the former, I thought, were more secure under my own eye. Being on the main road, I had considered it so safe that I had that day taken off the caps of my pistols and gun; but, drawing on my boots, recapping and distributing my surplus arms, I sallied forth. The muleteer would not go, but the deaf and dumb lad, with face of fire, drew his machete and followed.

It was pitchy dark and, on first going out from the light, I could not see at all, but stumbled along after my companions, who moved swiftly and without noise through the plaza and along the whole length of the town. In the suburbs we approached a hut which stood alone; the side toward us was closed, but the light of a fire issued from both ends. Here it was supposed the robbers were, unconscious of pursuit or suspicion. After a brief consultation, it was agreed that the party should separate, and one half enter at each end; the *alcalde*'s charge was to shoot the villains rather than let them escape. Stealing toward the hut, we rushed in at the same time from the opposite sides and captured an old woman, who sat on the ground replenishing the fire. She was not surprised at our visit, and, with a bitter laugh, said that the birds had flown. At that moment we heard the report of a musket, which was recognized as the signal of the men who had been stationed to watch them. All rushed out; another report hurried us on faster, and very soon we reached the foot of a mountain. As we ascended, the *alcalde* said that he saw a man crawling on his hands and feet up the side of the mountain and, snatching my double-barreled gun, he fired at him as coolly as he would have done at a woodcock; they all scattered in pursuit and I was left with Augustin and the deaf and dumb boy.

Moving on, but not very fast, and looking back occasionally to the distant lights in the village, with an unknown mountain before me and a dark night, I began to think that it was about enough for me to defend myself if attacked; although the affair had been got up on my account, it was straining a point for me to pass the night in helping to rid

the town of its robbers. Next I reflected that, if the gentlemen we were in pursuit of should take it into their heads to double back, my cap and white dress would make me conspicuous, and it might be awkward to meet them at this place. In order to gain time for consideration of what it was best to do, I walked back toward the town, and had not fully made up my mind when I reached the plaza.

Here I stopped, and in a few minutes a man passed, who said that he had met two of the robbers on the main road and that they had told him they would catch me in the morning. They had got it into their heads that I was an aide-de-camp of Carrera, and was returning from Belize with a large amount of money to pay the troops. In about an hour the *alcalde* and his *posse comitatus* returned. I had no notion of being robbed by mistake and, knowing the facility with which the robbers might go ahead and take a long shot at me, I asked the *alcalde* to furnish me with two men to go in advance and keep a lookout; but I was heartily sick of the country and the excitement of its petty alarms.

Daylight dispelled the gloom which night had cast over my spirits. Leaving Guastatoya, for some distance I rode through a cultivated country where the fields were divided by fences. Very soon I forgot all apprehensions of robbers and, tired of the slow pace of the cargo mules, I rode on leaving them far behind. At eleven o'clock I entered a ravine so wild that I thought it could not be the main road to Guatemala. There were no mule tracks visible and, returning, I took another road, with the result that I lost my way and rode the whole day alone. I could gain no certain intelligence of Augustin and the muleteer, but continued on in the belief that they were ahead of me. Pushing on rapidly, at dark I rode up to a hacienda on one side of the road, where I was very kindly received by the proprietor, who was a mulatto. To my great surprise, I learned from him that I had advanced to within one long day's journey of Guatemala.<sup>3</sup> He made me anxious, however, about the safety of

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3. Since locally Guatemala City is often referred to simply as Guatemala, no attempt has been made to differentiate between the city and country of that name in instances where the intent is obvious.

my luggage; but for that night I could do nothing. I lay down opposite a large household altar, over which was a figure of the Virgin. At about ten o'clock I was roused by the arrival of Augustin and the muleteer. Besides their apprehensions about me, they had had their own difficulties: two of the mules had broken down, obliging them to stop and rest and feed them.

Early the next morning, leaving the luggage with the muleteer (which, by the way, was at that time a very imprudent proceeding), and taking merely a change of apparel, I set out with Augustin. Almost immediately we commenced ascending a very steep and rugged mountain, which commanded at every step a wild and magnificent view. From the top we saw, at a great distance below us in the hollow of an amphitheatre of mountains, the village of El Puente,<sup>4</sup> the ground around which was white and trodden hard by caravans of mules. We descended to the village and crossed the bridge, which was laid on a stone arch thrown across a ravine with a cataract foaming through it; at this point we were completely encircled by mountains, wild to sublimity, and reminding me of some of the finest parts of Switzerland. On the other side of the bridge we commenced ascending another mountain. The road was winding, and when we reached the top, the view of the village and bridge at the immense distance below was surpassingly fine. Descending a short distance, we passed a village of huts, situated on the ridge of the mountain, commanding on both sides a view of an extensive valley four or five thousand feet below us. Continuing on this magnificent ridge, we descended upon a table of rich land and saw a gate opening into grounds which reminded me of park scenery in England, undulating, and ornamented with trees. In the midst of this stood the hacienda of San José, a long, low stone building with a corridor in front. It was one of those situations which, when least expected, touch a tender chord, call up cherished associa-

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4. If there ever was a Guatemalan village called El Puente (The Bridge), it seems to have disappeared.

tions, and make a traveler feel as though he could linger around it forever; it was particularly welcome to us, as we had not breakfasted.

It was a *hacienda de ganados*, or cattle hacienda, with hundreds of cattle roaming over it; but all that it could give us to eat were eggs, tortillas, and beans softened in hot water, the last being about equal to a basket of fresh chips. This over, we made a last push for Guatemala. The road lay over a table of land, green and rich as a European lawn, ornamented with trees, and with features of scenery peculiarly English. Muleteers, who had left the city at midnight and had already finished their day's work, were lying under the shade of the trees, with their saddles and cargoes piled up like walls and their mules pasturing near. Along the table was a line of huts, and if adorned instead of being deformed by the hand of man, this would be a region of poetic beauty. Indians, men and women, with loads on their backs, every party with a bundle of rockets, were returning from the "Capitol,"<sup>5</sup> as they proudly called it, to their villages among the mountains. All told us that two days before Carrera had re-entered the city with his soldiers.

When we were yet two leagues from the city, Augustin's horse gave out, but being anxious to have a view of the city before dark, I rode on. Late in the afternoon, as I was ascending a small eminence, two immense volcanoes stood up before me, seeming to scorn the earth and towering to the heavens. They were the great volcanoes of Agua and Fuego, forty miles distant, and nearly fifteen thousand feet high, wonderfully grand and beautiful. In a few moments the great plain of Guatemala appeared in view, surrounded by mountains; in its center was the city, a mere speck on the vast expanse, with churches and convents, and numerous turrets, cupolas, and steeples, still as if the spirit of peace rested upon it. It had no storied associations, but by its own

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5. An attempt has been made throughout the text to correct Stephens' frequent misspellings of Spanish words. In this instance, however, Stephens may have been intentionally recording an Indian pronunciation.

beauty it created an impression on the mind of a traveler which could never be effaced. I dismounted and tied my mule. As yet the sun lighted up the roofs and domes of the city, giving a reflection so dazzling that I could only look at them by stealth. By degrees its disk touched the top of the Volcán de Agua; slowly the whole orb sank behind it, illuminating the background with an atmosphere fiery red. A rich golden cloud rolled up its side and rested on the top and, while I gazed, the golden hues disappeared and the glory of the scene was gone.

Augustin came along with his poor horse hobbling after him and a pistol in his hand. He had been told on the way that Carrera's soldiers were riotous and that there were many ladrones about the suburbs of the city; he was in the humor to fire upon anyone who asked a question. I made him put up his pistols, and we both mounted. An immense ravine was still between us and the city. It was very dark when we reached the bottom of this ravine, and we were almost trodden down by a caravan of loaded mules coming out. Rising on the other side to the top, we entered the outer gate to the city, still a mile and a half from Guatemala. Inside were miserable huts, with large fires before them, surrounded by groups of drunken Indians and vagabond soldiers firing their muskets at random in the air. Augustin told me to spur, but his poor horse could not keep up, and we were obliged to move on at a walk. As yet I did not know where to stop; there was no hotel in Guatemala. What's the use of a hotel in Guatemala? Who ever goes to Guatemala? were the answers of a gentleman of that place to my inquiries on this subject. I had several letters of introduction, and one was to Mr. Hall, the English vice-consul; fortunately, I resolved to throw myself upon his hospitality.

We picked up a ragged Indian, who undertook to conduct us to the vice-consul's house, and under his guidance we entered the city at the foot of a long straight street. My country-bred mule seemed astonished at the sight of so many houses; he would not cross the gutters, which were wide and in the middle of the street. In spurring her over one, she gave a leap that, after her hard journey, made me proud

of her, but she broke her bridle and I was obliged to dismount and lead her. Augustin's poor beast was really past carrying him, and he followed on foot, whipping mine, the guide lending a hand before and behind. In this way we traversed the streets of Guatemala. Perhaps no diplomatist ever made a more unpretending entry into a capital. Our stupid Indian did not know where Mr. Hall lived and there were hardly any people in the streets to inquire of; I was an hour hauling my mule over the gutters and grumbling at the guide before I found the house. I knocked some time without receiving any answer. At length a young man opened the shutter of a balconied window, and told me that Mr. Hall was not at home. This would not serve my turn. I gave my name, and he retired; in a few minutes the large door was unlocked and Mr. Hall, himself, received me. He gave me a reason for not opening the door sooner, saying that the soldiers had mutinied that day for want of pay, and had threatened to sack the city. Carrera had exerted himself in trying to pacify them, and had borrowed fifty dollars from his (Mr. Hall's) neighbor, a French merchant. But the inhabitants were greatly alarmed and, when I knocked at his door, he had been afraid that the soldiers were beginning to put their threat into execution. Mr. Hall had taken down his staff, because on their last entry when he had had his flag flying, the soldiers had fired upon it, calling it a *bandera de guerra*. They were mostly Indians from the villages, ignorant and insolent. A few days before he had his hat knocked off by a sentinel because he did not raise it in passing, for which his complaint was then before the government.<sup>6</sup> The whole city was kept in a state of awe. No one ventured out at night, and Mr. Hall wondered how I had been able to wander through the streets without being molested. All this was not very agreeable, but it could not destroy my satisfaction in reaching Guatemala. For the first time since I entered the country, I had a good bed and a pair of clean sheets. It was two months that day since I

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6. Stephens comments that "It is due to Carrera to say that by his orders the soldier received two hundred lashes."



embarked from New York and only one since I entered the country, but it seemed at least a year.

The luxury of my rest that night still lingers in my recollections, and the morning air was the most pure and invigorating I ever breathed. Situated in the *tierras templadas*, or temperate regions, on a tableland five thousand feet above the sea, the climate of Guatemala is that of perpetual spring. The general aspect reminded me of the best class of Italian cities. It is laid out in regular blocks of from three to four hundred feet square, the streets crossing each other at right angles. The houses, made to resist the action of earthquakes, are of only one story, but very spacious, with large doors and windows protected by iron balconies. In the center of the city stands the plaza, a square of one hundred and fifty yards on each side, paved with stone, with a colonnade on three sides. On one side stands the old viceregal palace and hall of the Audiencia; on another are the cabildo and other city buildings; on the third the customhouse and palace of the *ci-devant* Marquisate of Aycinena; and situated between the archiepiscopal palace and the Colegio de Infantes is the Cathedral, a beautiful edifice in the best style of modern architecture. In the center is a large stone fountain of imposing workmanship which is supplied with pipes from the mountains about two leagues distant; the area is used as a market place. The churches and convents correspond with the beauty of the plaza, and their costliness and grandeur would attract the attention of tourists in Italy or old Spain.

The foundation of the city was laid in 1776, a year memorable in our own annals, and a time when our ancestors thought but little of the troubles of their neighbors. At that time the old capital, twenty-five miles distant, shattered and destroyed by earthquakes, was abandoned by its inhabitants and the present city built in the rich valley of Las Vacas, in a style commensurate with the dignity of a captaincy-general of Spain. I have seldom been more favorably impressed with the first appearance of any city, and the only thing that pained me in a two hours' stroll through the streets was the sight of Carrera's ragged and insolent-looking soldiers; my

first thought was that in any city in Europe or the United States the citizens, instead of submitting to be lorded over by such barbarians, would rise en masse and pitch them out of the gates.

In the course of the morning I took possession of the house that had been occupied by Mr. DeWitt, our late chargé d'affaires. If I had been favorably impressed with the external appearance of the houses, I was charmed with the interior. The entrance was by a large double door through a passage paved with small black and white stones into a handsome patio or courtyard paved in like manner. On the sides were broad corridors paved with square red bricks, and along the foot of the corridors were borders of flowers. In front, on the street, and adjoining the entrance, was an anteroom with one large balconied window, and next to it was a *sala*, or parlor, with two windows. At the farther end a door opened from the side into the *comedor*, or dining room. At the end of the dining room was a door leading to a sleeping room, which, in turn, had a door which led into another room of the same size, all also had doors and windows opening upon the corridor. The building and corridor were continued across the foot of the lot; in the center were rooms for servants, and in the corners were a kitchen and stable, completely hidden from sight and each furnished with a separate fountain. This is the plan of all the houses in Guatemala; others are much larger—as, for instance, that of the Aycinena family which covered a square of two hundred feet—but mine combined more beauty and comfort than any habitation I ever saw.

At two o'clock my luggage arrived, and I was most comfortably installed in my new domicile. The *sala*, or reception room, was furnished with a large bookcase, containing rows of books with yellow bindings, which gave me twinging recollections of a law office at home; the archives of the legation had quite an imposing aspect. Over Mr. DeWitt's writing table hung another memorial of home: a facsimile of the Declaration of Independence.

My first business was to make arrangements to send a trusty escort for Mr. Catherwood; with this accomplished,

it was incumbent upon me to look around for the government to which I was accredited.

From the time of the conquest, the Kingdom of Guatemala had remained in a state of profound tranquillity as a colony of Spain. The Indians submitted quietly to the authority of the whites, and all bowed to the divine right of the Romish Church. In the beginning of the present century a few scattering rays of light penetrated to the heart of the American Continent, and in 1823 the Kingdom of Guatemala, as it was then called, declared its independence of Spain; after a short union with Mexico, it constituted itself a republic under the name of the United States of Central America. By the articles of agreement the confederacy was composed of five states: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Chiapas had the privilege of entering the union if it should think proper, but it never did. Quezaltenago, a district of Guatemala, was afterward erected into a separate state and added to the confederacy.

The monster party-spirit was rocked in the very cradle of their independence, and a line of demarcation was at once drawn between the aristocratic and democratic parties. The local names of these at first confused me, the former being called the Central, or Servile, and the latter the Federal, or Liberal or Democratic Party. Substantially they were the same as our own Federal and Democratic Parties. The reader will perhaps find it difficult to understand that in any country, in a political sense, Federal and Democratic can mean the same thing, or that when I speak of a Federalist I mean a Democrat; to prevent confusion in referring to them hereafter, I shall call the aristocratic, the Central, and the democratic, the Liberal Party. The former, like our own Federal Party, was for consolidating and centralizing the powers of the general government, and the latter contended for the sovereignty of the states. The Central Party consisted of a few leading families, who had, by reason of certain privileges of monopoly for importations under the old Spanish government, assumed the tone of nobles, sustained by the priests and friars, and the religious feeling of the country. The Liberal Party was composed of men of intellect and energy; they had thrown off the yoke of the Romish Church

and, in the first enthusiasm of emancipated minds, tore away at once the black mantle of superstition which had been thrown like a funeral pall over the genius of the people. The Centralists wished to preserve the usages of the colonial system, and they resisted every innovation and every attack, direct or indirect, upon the privileges of the Church and their own prejudices or interests. The Liberals, ardent and cherishing brilliant schemes of reform, aimed at an instantaneous change in popular feelings and customs, and they considered every moment lost that did not establish some new theory or sweep away some old abuse. The Centralists forgot that civilization is a jealous divinity which does not admit of partition and cannot remain stationary. The Liberals forgot that civilization requires a harmony of intelligence, of customs, and of laws. The example of the United States and of their free institutions was held up by the Liberals; but the Centralists contended that, with their ignorant and heterogeneous population, scattered over a vast territory without facilities of communication, it was a hallucination to take our country as a model. At the third session of Congress the parties came to an open rupture, and the deputies of El Salvador, always the most liberal state in the confederacy, withdrew.

Flores, the vice-chief of the State of Guatemala, a Liberal, had made himself odious to the priests and friars by laying a contribution upon the convent at Quezaltenango. While he was on a visit to that place, the friars of the convent had excited the populace against him as an enemy to religion. A mob had gathered before his house with cries of "Death to the heretic!" Flores fled to the church, but as he was entering the door a mob of women seized him, wrested a stick from his hands, beat him with it, tore off his cap, and dragged him by the hair. He escaped from these furies and ran up into the pulpit. The alarm bell was sounded, and all the rabble of the town poured into the plaza. A few soldiers endeavored to cover the entrance to the church, but were assailed with stones and clubs; and the mob, bearing down all opposition, forced its way into the church, making the roof ring with cries of "Death to the heretic!" Rushing toward the pulpit, some tried to unhinge it, others to scale

it. Others struck at the unhappy vice-chief with knives tied to the ends of long poles, while a young fiend, with one foot on the mouldings of the pulpit and the other elevated in the air, leaned over and seized him by the hair. The curate, who was in the pulpit with him, frightened at the tempest he had assisted to raise, held up the Holy of Holies, and begged the mob to spare Flores, promising that he should leave the city immediately. The unhappy Flores, on his knees, confirmed these promises, but the friars urged on the mob, who became so excited with religious frenzy that, after kneeling before the figure of the Saviour exclaiming, "We adore thee, Oh Lord, we venerate thee," rose up with the ferocious cry, "but for thy honor and glory this blasphemer, this heretic, must die!" They dragged him from the pulpit across the floor of the church, and in the cloisters threw him into the hands of the fanatic and furious horde, where the women, like unchained furies, with their fists, sticks, and stones, beat him to death. His murderers stripped his body, leaving it disfigured and an object of horror, exposed to the insults of the populace, and then they dispersed throughout the city, demanding the heads of Liberals, and crying "*Viva la Religión, y mueran los herejes del Congreso.*" About the same time religious fanaticism swept the state, and the Liberal Party was crushed in Guatemala.

But the state of El Salvador, from the beginning the leader in liberal principles, was prompt in its efforts of vengeance, and on the sixteenth of March, 1827, its army appeared within the outer gates of Guatemala, threatening the destruction of the capital. But religious fanaticism was too strong; the priests ran through the streets exhorting the people to take up arms, the friars headed mobs of women who with drawn knives swore destruction to all who attempted to overturn their religion; and the Salvadorans were defeated and driven back. For two years the parties were at open war. In 1829 the troops of El Salvador, under General Morazán, who had now become the head of the Liberal Party, again marched upon Guatemala and, after three days' fighting, entered the city in triumph. All the leaders of the Central Party, the Aycinenas, the Pavons, and Peñoles, were banished or fled; the convents were

broken up, the institution of friars was abolished, and the friars themselves put on board vessels and shipped out of the country; the archbishop, anticipating banishment, or perhaps fearing a worse fate, sought safety in flight.

In 1831 General Morazán was elected president of the republic; at the expiration of his term he was re-elected, and for eight years the Liberal Party had the complete ascendancy. During the latter part of his term, however, there was great discontent, particularly on account of forced loans and exactions for the support of government, or, as the Centralists said, to gratify the rapacity of unscrupulous and profligate officeholders. The Church party was always on the alert. The exiles in the United States and Mexico, and on the frontier, with their eyes always fixed upon home, kept up constant communications and fostered the growing discontents. Some of them, in a state of penury abroad, ventured to return, and when these were not molested, others soon followed. At this time came the rise of Carrera, which was at first more dreaded by the Centralists than by the Liberals, but suddenly, and to the Centralists' utter astonishment, his rise to power placed them nominally at the head of government.

In the May preceding my arrival, the term of the president, senators, and deputies expired, and no elections had been held to supply their places. The vice-president, who had been elected during an unexpired term, was the only existing officer of the Federal government. The states of Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica had declared themselves independent of the Federal government. The states of El Salvador and Quezaltenango sustained the Federal government, and Morazán, as commander-in-chief of the Federal forces, had defeated Ferrera and established troops in Honduras, which gave the Liberal Party the actual control of three states.

Virtually, then, the states stood "three and three." Where was my government? The last Central American Congress, before its dissolution, had recommended that panacea for political ills, a convention to amend the Constitution. The governments of England and France were represented in Central America by consuls-general. Neither had any treaty

with Central America. England could not procure one except by the surrender of all claim to the Island of Roatán in the Gulf of Honduras, and to Belize. One had been drawn up with France, but, though pressed with great earnestness by the consul-general of that country, the senate refused to ratify it. The government of the United States was the only government that had any treaty with Central America, and up to the time of Mr. DeWitt's departure from the country, we were represented by a *chargé d'affaires*. The British consul-general had published a circular denying the existence of the general government, and the French consul was not on good terms with either party. My arrival, and the course I might take, were a subject of some interest to politicians.

There was but one side to politics in Guatemala. Both parties had a beautiful way of producing unanimity of opinion by driving out of the country all who did not agree with them. If there were any Liberals, I did not meet them, or they did not dare to open their lips. The Central Party, only six months in power, and still surprised at being there, was fluttering between arrogance and fear. The old families, whose principal members had been banished or politically ostracized, and the clergy were elated at the expulsion of the Liberal Party, and their return to what they considered their natural right to rule the state. They talked of recalling the banished archbishop and friars, restoring the privileges of the Church, repairing the convents, reviving monastic institutions, and making Guatemala what it had once been, the jewel of Spanish America.

One of my first visits of ceremony was to Señor Rivera Paz, the chief of state. I was presented by Mr. Henry Savage, who had formerly acted as United States consul at Guatemala. He was the only American resident there and to him I am under many obligations for his constant attentions. The State of Guatemala, having declared its independence of the Federal government, was at that time governed by a temporary body called a Constituent Assembly. On the last entry of Carrera into the city, in the March preceding my arrival, Salazar, the chief of state, fled; Carrera, on horseback, knocked at the door of Señor Rivera

Paz before daylight and, by his individual pleasure, installed him as chief. It was a fortunate choice for the people of Guatemala. He was about thirty-eight and gentlemanly in his appearance and manners; in all the trying positions in which he was afterward placed, he exhibited more than ordinary prudence and judgment.

I had been advised that it would be agreeable to the government of Guatemala for me to present my credentials to the chief of that state, and afterward to the chiefs of the other states, and that the states separately would treat of the matters for which I was accredited to the general government. The object of this was to preclude a recognition on my part of the power which was, or claimed to be, the general government. The suggestion was of course preposterous, but it showed the dominion of party spirit with men who knew better. Señor Rivera Paz expressed his regret at my happening to visit the country at such an unfortunate period; he assured me of the friendly disposition of that state, and that it would do all in its power to serve me. During my visit I was introduced to several of the leading members of the administration, and I left with a favorable opinion of Rivera Paz, which was never shaken in regard to him personally.

In the evening, in company with Mr. Hall, I attended the last meeting of the Constituent Assembly, which was held in the old Hall of Congress. The room was large, hung with portraits of old Spaniards distinguished in the history of the country, and dimly lighted. The deputies sat on a platform at one end, elevated about six feet, the president on an elevation in a large chair, and two secretaries at a table beneath. On the wall were the arms of the republic, the groundwork of which was three volcanoes, emblematic, I suppose, of the combustible state of the country. The deputies sat on each side, about thirty being present, nearly half of whom were priests with black gowns and caps. By the dull light, the scene carried me back to the dark ages and seemed a meeting of inquisitors.

The subject under discussion was a motion to revive the old law of tithes, which had been abolished by the Liberal



Party. The law was passed unanimously; but there was a discussion upon a motion to appropriate a small part of the proceeds for the support of hospitals for the poor. The priests took part in the discussion, and with liberal sentiments; but a lay member, with big black whiskers, opposed it, saying that the Church stood like a light in darkness, and the Marquis of Aycinena, a priest and the leading member of the party, said that "what was raised for God should be given to God alone." There was another discussion as to whether the law should operate upon cattle then in being, or also upon those to be born thereafter, and finally, as to the means of enforcing it. One gentleman contended that coercive measures should not be used and, with a fine burst of eloquence, said that reliance might be placed upon the religious feelings of the people, that the poorest Indian would come forward and contribute his mite. But the Assembly decided that the law should be enforced by *Las leyes antiguas de los Españoles*, the old laws of the Spaniards, the severities of which had been one of the great causes of revolution in all Spanish countries. There was something horrible in this retrograde legislation. I could hardly realize that, in the nineteenth century, men of sense, in a country through the length and breadth of which free principles were struggling for the ascendancy, would dare fasten on the people a yoke which, even in the dark ages, was too galling to be borne. The tone of debate was respectable, but it was calm and unimpassioned, from the entire absence of any opposition party. Yet the Assembly purported to be a popular body, representing the voice of the people. It was a time of great excitement, and the last night of the session; Mr. Hall and I, in addition to four men and three boys were the only listeners.

As it was not safe to be in the streets after eight o'clock, the Assembly was adjourned. After a short session the next morning, it assembled at a state breakfast. The place of meeting was in the old library, a venerable room containing a valuable collection of rare old Spanish books and manuscripts, among which had lately been discovered the two missing volumes of Fuentes, and where I promised myself

much satisfaction. The only guests were Mr. Hall, the French consul-general, Colonel Monte Rosa, an aide of Carrera, and myself. Carrera had been invited but had not come. The table was profusely ornamented with flowers and fruits. There was very little wine drunk, no toasts, and no gaiety. There was not a gray-haired man at table; all were young, and so connected that it seemed a large family party. More than half of them had been in exile, and if Morazán returned to power they would all be scattered again.

I had been but three days in Guatemala, and already the place was dull. The clouds which hung over the political horizon weighed upon the spirits of the inhabitants, and in the evening I was obliged to shut myself up in my house alone. In the uncertainty which hung over my movements, and to avoid the trouble of housekeeping for perhaps a few weeks, I dined and supped at the house of the señora, an interesting young widow, who owned my house (her husband had been shot in a private revolution of his own getting up) and lived nearly opposite. The first evening I remained there till nine o'clock; but as I was crossing on my return home a fierce "*Quién vive?* (Who goes?)" "*Qué gente?* (What people?)" "*Qué Regimiento?* (What regiment?)" and then fire. One fellow had already obeyed his orders literally and, hurrying through the three questions without waiting for answers, fired and shot a woman. The answers were, "*Patria Libre* (Country free)"; "*Paisano* (Countryman)"; and "*Paz* (Peace)."

This challenge was a subject of annoyance all the time I was in Guatemala. The streets were not lighted and, hearing it, sometimes at the distance of a square, in a ferocious voice, without being able to see the sentinel, I always imagined him with his musket at his shoulder, peering through the darkness to take aim. I felt less safe by reason of my foreign pronunciation; but I never met anyone, native or stranger, who was not nervous when within reach of the sentinel's challenge, or who would not go two squares out of the way to avoid it.

## Chapter X

*Hacienda of Naranjo. Lassoing. Diplomatic correspondence. Formulas. Fête of La Concepción. Taking the black veil. A countrywoman. Renouncing the world. Fireworks. Procession in honor of the Virgin. Another exhibition of fireworks. A fiery bull. Insolent soldiery.*

THE next day, in company with Mr. Savage, I rode to Naranjo, a small hacienda of the Aycinena family, about seven miles from the city; beyond the walls all was beautiful. In the palmy days of Guatemala, the Aycinenas rolled to the Naranjo in an enormous carriage, full of carving and gilding, in the style of the grandes of Spain; the carriage now stands in the courtyard of the family house as a memorial of better days. We entered by a large gate into a road upon their land, undulating and ornamented with trees. We rode around the borders of a large artificial lake, made by damming up several streams, and entered a large cattle yard, in the center of which, on the side of a declivity, stood the house, a strong stone structure with a broad piazza in front which commanded a beautiful view of the volcanoes of Antigua.

The hacienda was only valuable because of its vicinity to Guatemala, being what would be called at home a country-seat; it contained only seven thousand acres of land, about seventy mules, and seven hundred head of cattle. It was the season for marking and numbering the cattle, and two of the Señores Aycinena were at the hacienda to superintend the operations. The cattle had already been caught and brought in, but as I had never seen the process of lassoing, after dinner a hundred head which had been kept for two

days without food were let loose into a field two or three miles in circumference. Eight men were mounted, with iron spurs an inch long on their naked heels. Each held a lasso in hand, which consisted of an entire cow's hide cut into a single cord about twenty yards long; one end was fastened to the horse's tail, which was first wrapped in leaves to prevent its being lacerated, and the rest, wound into a coil, was held by the rider in his right hand, which rested on the pommel of the saddle. The cattle had all dispersed; we placed ourselves on an elevation commanding a partial view of the field, and the riders scattered in search of them. In a little while thirty or forty cattle rushed past, followed by the riders at full speed, and very soon they were out of sight. We had either to lose the sport or follow; and in one of the doublings, taking particularly good care to avoid the throng of furious cattle and headlong riders, I drew up to the side of two men who were chasing a single ox, and followed over hill, through bush, brush, and underwood. Finally one rider threw his lasso beautifully over the horns of the ox and then turned his horse; the ox bounded to the length of the lasso and, without shaking horse or rider, pitched headlong to the ground.

At this moment a herd swept by with the whole company in full pursuit. A large yellow ox separated from the rest and all followed him. For a mile he kept ahead, doubling and dodging, but the horsemen crowded him down toward the lake and, after an ineffectual attempt to bolt, he rushed into the water. Two horsemen followed and drove him out and gave him a start, but in a few moments the lasso whizzed over his head and, while horse and rider stood like marble, the ox again came with a plunge to the ground. The riders scattered, and one horse and rider rolled over in such a way that I thought every bone in the rider's body must be broken. The sport was so exciting that I, who at the beginning had been particularly careful to keep out of harm's way, felt very much disposed to have my own horse's tail tied up and to take a lasso in my hand. The effect of the sport was heightened by the beauty of the scene, with the great volcanoes of Agua and Fuego towering above us and, toward

evening, throwing a deep shade over the plain. It was nearly dark when we returned to the house. With that refinement of politeness (which I believe is exclusively Spanish) the gentlemen escorted us some distance on our road back to the city. At dark we reached Guatemala and, to our great satisfaction, learned at the gate that the soldiers were confined to the barracks.

The news of my arrest and imprisonment, with great exaggeration of circumstance, had reached Guatemala before me, and I was advised that the state government intended to make me a communication on the subject. I waited several days and, not receiving any, made a formal complaint, setting forth the facts and concluding that I would not attempt to suggest what ought to be done, but felt satisfied that the government would do what was consistent with its own honor and the rights of a friendly nation. In a few days I received an answer from the Secretary of State, conveying the regrets of the President for the occurrence, and stating that, before receiving my note, the government had taken the measures which it deemed proper in the premises. This was very indefinite. I bore considerable anger against the parties concerned and, moreover, I had heard out of doors something about these "measures." For the future protection of Americans who were or might be in that country, I considered it necessary to see to it that so notorious an outrage not be treated lightly. With this in mind, I addressed a further note to the Secretary, asking specifically whether the officer and alcalde referred to had been punished, and if so, in what way. To this I received for answer that, in the circumstances in which the country was placed by means of an extraordinary popular revolution, and because of the distrust prevailing in the frontier villages, local authorities were more suspicious than usual in the matter of passports; and that the outrage, *el atropellamiento*, which I had suffered, had had its origin in the orders of a military officer, *un oficial militar*, who suspected that I and my companion were "enemies"; and that General Cascara, as soon as he was informed of the circumstances, had removed the officer from his command. The reply went on to say that the government, much to its regret, because of the difficult

circumstances in which the country was placed, did not have the power to give that security to travelers which it desired to give, but that it would issue preventive orders to the local authorities to secure me in my further travels.

I had understood that General Cascara had removed the officer, but the intelligence was hardly received in Guatemala before Carrera ordered him to be restored; and I afterward saw in a San Salvador paper that the officer had threatened to shoot General Cascara if his degradation was not revoked. In further communications with the secretary and the chief of the state, they confessed their inability to do anything, and being satisfied that they desired to do something even more than myself, I did not consider it worth while to press the subject; indeed, in strictness, I had no right to call upon the state government. The general government had not the least particle of power in the state, and I mention this circumstance to show the utter feebleness of the administration and the wretched condition of the country generally. It troubled me on one account, as it showed the difficulty and danger of prosecuting the travels I had contemplated.

From the moment of my arrival I was struck with the devout character of the city of Guatemala. At matins and vespers the churches were all open, and the people, particularly the women, went regularly to prayers. Every house had its figure of the Virgin, the Saviour, or some tutelary saint, and on the door were billets of paper with prayers:

*La verdadera sangre de Cristo, nuestro redentor que sólo representado en Egipto libró a los Israelitas de un brazo fuerte y poderoso, librenos de la peste, guerra, y muerte repentina. Amén.* (The true blood of Christ our Redeemer, which merely exhibited in Egypt, freed the Israelites from a strong and powerful arm, deliver us from pestilence, war, and sudden death. Amen.)

*O María, concebida sin pecado, rogad por nosotros, que recurrimos a vos.* (O Virgin, conceived without sin, pray for us, who have recourse to thee.)

*Ave María, gracia plena, y la santísima Trinidad nos favorezca.* (Hail Mary, full of grace, and may the Holy Trinity favour us.)

*El dulce nombre de Jesús  
Sea con nosotros. Amén.*

On the first Sunday after my arrival was celebrated the fête of La Concepción, a fête always honored in the observances of the Catholic Church and more important this day from the circumstance that a probationer in the convent of La Concepción intended to take the black veil. At break of day the church bells rang throughout the city, cannon were fired in the plaza and rockets and fireworks set off at the corners of the streets. At nine o'clock crowds of people were hurrying to the Church of La Concepción. Before the door, and extending across the streets, were arches decorated with evergreens and flowers. The broad steps of the church were strewn with pine leaves, and on the platform were men firing rockets. The church was one of the handsomest in Guatemala, rich with gold and silver ornaments, pictures, and figures of saints, and adorned with arches and flowers. The Padre Aycinena, the vice-president of the state and the leading member of the Constituent Assembly, was the preacher of the day, and his high reputation attracted a large concourse of people. The pulpit was at one end of the church, and the great mass of people who faced it were anxious to hear the sermon. The other end was comparatively vacant, and I placed myself on a step of the nearest altar, directly in front of the grating of the convent. At the close of the sermon there was a discharge of rockets and crackers from the steps of the church, the smoke of which clouded the interior; the smell of powder was stronger than that of the burning incense. The floor was strewn with pine leaves and covered with kneeling women, each with a black mantilla drawn close over the top of the head and held together under the chin. I never saw a more beautiful spectacle than these rows of kneeling women, their faces pure and lofty in expression, lighted up by the enthusiasm of religion. Among them, fairer than most and lovely as any, was one from my own land; not more than twenty-two, she was married to a gentleman belonging to one of the first families of Guatemala, a gentleman who was once an exile in the United States. In a new land and among a new people, she had embraced a new faith; with the enthusiasm of a youthful convert, no lady in Guatemala was more devout, more regular

at mass, or more strict in all the discipline of the Catholic Church than the Sister Susannah.

After the fireworks there was a long ceremony at the altar, and then a general rush toward the other extremity of the church. The convent was directly adjoining, and in the partition wall, about six feet from the floor, was a high iron grating; about four feet beyond it was another grating at which the nuns attended the services of the church. Above the iron grating was a wooden one, and from this in a few minutes issued a low strain of wild Indian music. Presently a figure in white, with a long white veil and a candle in her right hand and both arms extended, walked slowly to within a few feet of the grating, and then as slowly retired. Presently the same low note issued from the grating below, and we saw advancing a procession of white nuns, with long white veils, each holding in her hand a long lighted candle. The music ceased and a chant arose, so low that it required intent listening to catch the sound. Advancing two and two with this low chant to within a few feet of the grating, the sisters turned off different ways. At the end of the procession were two black nuns, leading between them the probationer dressed in white, with a white veil and a wreath of roses round her head. The white nuns arranged themselves on each side, their chant ceased and the voice of the probationer was heard alone, but so faint that it seemed the breathing of a spirit of air. The white nuns strewed flowers before her, and she advanced between the two black ones. Three times she stopped and kneeled, continuing the same low chant, and the last time the white nuns gathered around her, strewing flowers upon her head and in her path. Slowly they led her to the back part of the chapel, and all kneeled before the altar.

At this time a strain of music was heard at the other end of the church. A way was cleared through the crowd and a procession advanced, consisting of the principal priests clothed in their richest robes, and headed by the venerable provisor, an octogenarian with white hair and tottering on the verge of the grave, who was as remarkable for the piety of his life as for his venerable appearance. A layman bore



on a rich frame a gold crown and scepter studded with jewels. The procession advanced to a small door on the right of the grating, and the two black nuns and the probationer appeared in the doorway. Some words passed between her and the provisor, which I understood to be an examination by him of whether her proposed abandonment of the world was voluntary or not. This over, the provisor removed the wreath of roses and the white veil, and put on her head the crown and in her hand the scepter. The music sounded loud notes of triumph and in a few moments she reappeared at the grating with the crown and scepter and a dress sparkling with jewels. The sisters embraced her and again threw roses upon her. It seemed horrible to heap upon her the pomp and pleasures of the world at the moment when she was about to bid farewell to them forever. Again she kneeled before the altar; and when she rose the jewels and precious stones, the rich ornaments with which she was decorated, were taken from her, and she returned to the bishop, who took away the crown and scepter, and put on her head the black veil. Once again she appeared before the grating for the last, the fatal step was not yet taken: the black veil was not drawn. Again the nuns pressed round, and this time they almost devoured her with kisses.

I knew nothing of her story. I had not heard that the ceremony was to take place till late in the evening before, and I had made up my mind that she would be old and ugly; but she was not, nor was she faded and worn with sorrow, the picture of a broken heart, nor yet a young and beautiful enthusiast. She was not more than twenty-three and had one of those good faces which, without setting men wild by their beauty, bear the impress of a nature well qualified for the performance of all duties belonging to daughter and wife and mother, speaking the kindliness and warmth of a woman's heart. It was a pale face, and she seemed conscious of the important step and the solemn vows she was taking, and to have no pangs—yet, who can read what is passing in the human breast?

She returned to the provisor who drew over her face a black veil; and music rose in bursts of rejoicing that one who

was given to the world to take a share in its burdens had withdrawn herself from it. Immediately commenced the hum of restrained voices and, working my way through the crowd, I joined a party of ladies, one of whom was my fair countrywoman. She was from a small country town in Pennsylvania, and the romance of her feelings toward convents and nuns had not yet worn off. On Carrera's first invasion she had taken refuge in the convent of La Concepción, and she spoke with enthusiasm of the purity and piety of the nuns, describing some as surpassing in all the attributes of woman. She knew particularly the one who had just taken the veil, and told me that in a few days the nun would appear at the grating of the convent to embrace her friends and bid them farewell, and she promised to take me there and procure for me a share in the distribution.

During this time rockets were fired from the steps, and in the street, immediately in front, was a frame of fireworks thirty feet high, which the whole crowd waited on the steps and in the street to see set off. Everybody spoke of the absurdity of such an exhibition by daylight, but they said it was the custom. The piece was complicated in its structure, and in the center was a large box. There was a whizzing of wheels, a great smoke, and occasionally a red flash; and for the finale, as the extremities burned out, with a smart cracking the box flew open and, when the smoke cleared away, disclosed the figure of a little black nun, at which all laughed and went away.

In the afternoon there was a procession in honor of the Virgin. Although Guatemala was dull and, by the convulsions of the times, debarred all kinds of gaiety, religious processions went on as usual; it would have been an evidence of an expiring state to neglect them. All the streets through which the procession was to pass were strewed with pine leaves, and crossing them were arches decorated with evergreens and flowers. The long balconied windows were ornamented with curtains of crimson silk and flags with fanciful devices. At the corners of the streets were altars, under arbors of evergreens as high as the tops of the houses, which were adorned with pictures and silver ornaments from the

churches, the whole being covered with flowers. Rich as the whole of Central America is in natural productions, the valley of Guatemala is distinguished for the beauty and variety of its flowers. For one day the fields had been stripped of their clothing to beautify the city. I have seen great fêtes in Europe, got up with lavish expenditure of money, but never anything so simply beautiful. My stroll through the streets before the procession was the most interesting part of the day. All the inhabitants, in their best dresses, were there: the men standing at the corners, and the women, in black mantillas, seated in long rows on each side. The flags and curtains in the balconied windows, the green of the streets, the profusion of flowers, the vistas through the arches, and the simplicity of manners which permitted ladies of the first class to mingle freely in the crowd and sit along the street, formed a picture of beauty that even now relieves the stamp of dullness with which Guatemala is impressed upon my mind.

The procession for which all these beautiful preparations had been made opened with a single Indian, old, wrinkled, dirty, ragged, bareheaded, and staggering under the load of an enormous bass drum, which he carried on his back; the drum seemed as old as the conquest, with every cord and the head on one side broken. Another Indian in the same ragged costume followed him with one ponderous drumstick, with which from time to time he struck the old drum. Then came an Indian with a large whistle, corresponding in venerableness of aspect to the drum. From time to time, he gave a fierce blast on the whistle and looked around with a comical air of satisfaction for applause. Next followed a little boy about ten years old, wearing a cocked hat, boots above his knees, a drawn sword, and the mask of a hideous African. He was marshaling twenty or thirty persons not inaptly called "the Devils," all wearing grotesque and hideous masks and ragged, fantastic dresses; some had reed whistles, some were knocking sticks together. The principal actors were two pseudo-women, with broad-brimmed European hats, frocks which were high in the neck with the waist across the breast, large boots, and each with an old guitar,

waltzing and dancing an occasional fandango. How it happened that these devils, who of course excited laughter in the crowd, came to form part of a religious procession, I could not learn. The boys followed them just as they do the military with us on a Fourth of July; in fact, with the Guatemala boys, there is no good procession without good devils.

Next, and in striking contrast, came four beautiful boys, six or eight years old, dressed in white frocks and pantalettes, with white gauze veils over wreaths of roses, perfect emblems of purity. Then came four young priests, bearing golden candlesticks, with wax candles lighted. Following the priests were four Indians, carrying on their shoulders the figure of an angel larger than life, with expanded wings made of gauze, and puffed out like a cloud. It was intended to appear to float in air but it was dressed more after the fashion of this world, with the frock rather short, and the suspenders of the stockings of pink ribbons. Then, borne as before on the shoulders of Indians, and again larger than life, came the figure of Judith, with a drawn sword in one hand and the gory head of Holofernes in the other. After one more angel with a cloud of silk over her head was the great object of veneration, *La Virgen de la Concepción*, on a low handbarrow, richly decorated with gold and silver and a profusion of flowers, and protected by a rich silken canopy upborne on the ends of four gilded poles. Priests followed in their costly dresses—one under a silken canopy holding up the Host—before the imaginary splendor of which all fell on their knees. The whole concluded with a worse set of devils than those which led the procession: five hundred of Carrera's soldiers, dirty and ragged, and carrying their muskets without any order, with fanaticism added to their usual expression of ferocity. The officers were dressed in any costume they could command. A few, with black hat and silver or gold band, like footmen, carried their heads very high; many were lame from gunshot wounds badly cured. A gentleman who was with me pointed out several who were known to have committed assassinations and murders, for which, in a country that had any government, they would have been hung. The city was at their

mercy, and Carrera was the only man living who had any control over them.

At the head of the street the procession filed off into the cross streets, and the figure of the Virgin was taken from its place and set up on the altar. The priests kneeled before it and prayed, and the whole crowd fell on their knees. I was at the corner near the altar which commanded a view of four streets, and rising a little on one knee, saw in all the streets a dense mass of kneeling figures, rich men and beggars, lovely women and stupid-looking Indians, fluttering banners and curtains in balconied windows, and the figures of angels in their light gauze drapery seeming to float in air. The loud chant of the crowd, swollen by the deep chorus of the soldiers' voices, produced a scene of mingled beauty and deformity at once captivating and repulsive. This over, all rose, the Virgin was replaced on her throne, and the procession again moved. At the next altar I turned aside and went to the square in front of the Church of San Francisco, the place fixed for the grand finale of the honors to the Virgin, the exhibition of fireworks!

At dark the procession entered the foot of a street leading to the square. It approached with a loud chant, and at a distance nothing was visible but a long train of burning candles, making the street light as day. The devils were still at its head, and its arrival in the square was announced by a discharge of rockets. In a few minutes the first piece of fireworks was set off from the balustrade of the church; the figures on the roof were lighted by the glare, and, though not built expressly for that purpose, the church answered exceedingly well for the exhibition.

The next piece, on the ground of the square, was a national one called the *Toro*, or Bull, and as much a favorite in an exhibition of fireworks as the devils in a religious procession. It consisted of a frame covered with pasteboard in the form of a bull, on the outside of which were the fireworks. Into this figure of the bull, a man thrust his head and shoulders and then, with nothing but his legs visible, he rushed into the thickest of the crowd, scattering on all sides streams of fire. I was standing with a party of ladies and with

several members of the Constituent Assembly who were speaking of an invasion of troops from Quezaltenango, and of the sally of Carrera to repel them. As the *Toro* came at us, we retreated till we could go no farther; the ladies screamed, and we bravely turned our backs and, holding down our heads, sheltered them from the shower of fire. All said it was dangerous, but it was the custom. There was more cheerfulness and gaiety than I had yet seen in Guatemala, and I felt sorry when the exhibition was over.

All day I had felt particularly the influence of the beautiful climate; the mere breathing of the air was a luxury. And the evening was worthy of such a day; the moonbeams were lighting up the façade of the venerable church, showing in sadness a rent made by an earthquake from top to bottom. As we walked home, the streets were lighted with a brilliancy almost unearthly; and the ladies, proud of their moonlight, almost persuaded me that it was a land to love.

Continuing on our way, we passed a guardhouse, where a group of soldiers were lying at full length, so as to make everybody pass off the walk and go round them. Perhaps three or four thousand people, a large portion of them ladies, were turned off. All felt the insolence of these fellows, and I have no doubt some felt a strong disposition to kick them out of the way; but, though young men enough passed to drive the whole troop out of the city, no complaint was made, and no notice whatever taken of it. In one of the corridors of the plaza another soldier lay on his back crosswise with his musket by his side, muttering to everybody that passed, "Tread on me if you dare, and you'll see!" and we all took good care not to tread on him. I returned to my house to pass the evening in solitude, and it was melancholy to reflect that, with the elements of so much happiness, Guatemala was made so miserable.

## Chapter XI

*The provisor. News of the day, how published in Guatemala. Visit to the Convent of La Concepción. The farewell of the nun. Carrera. Sketch of his life. The cholera. Insurrections. Carrera heads the insurgents. His appearance in Guatemala. Capture of the city. Carrera triumphant. Arrival of Morazán. Hostilities. Pursuit of Carrera. His defeat. He is again uppermost. Interview with Carrera. His character.*

THE next three or four days I passed in receiving and paying visits, and in making myself acquainted with the condition of the country. Among the most interesting visitors was the venerable provisor, who, since the banishment of the archbishop, had been acting as head of the church; by a late bull of the Pope, he had been appointed bishop, but he had not yet been ordained owing to the troubled times. A friend in Baltimore had procured for me a letter from the archbishop in that city, to whom I here acknowledge my obligations, recommending me to all his brother ecclesiastics in Central America. The venerable provisor received this letter as from a brother in the Church, and upon the strength of it, when I set out later for Palenque, gave me a letter of recommendation to all the curas under his charge.

During the day my time passed agreeably enough; but the evenings, in which I was obliged to keep within doors, were long and lonely. My house was so near the plaza that I could hear the sentinel's challenge and from time to time the report of a musket. These reports, in the stillness of night, were always startling. For some time I did not know the cause; but at length I learned that cows and mules straggled

about the city, and when they were heard moving at a distance and not answering the challenge, they were fired upon without ceremony.

There was but one newspaper in Guatemala, and that a weekly, a mere chronicler of decrees and political movements. City news passed by word of mouth. Every morning everybody asked his neighbor what was the news. One day it was that an old deaf woman, who could not hear the sentinel's challenge, had been shot; another day it was that Asturias, a rich old citizen, had been stabbed; and one morning the report circulated that thirty-three nuns in the convent of Santa Teresa had been poisoned. This latter news was the subject of excitement for several days, until the nuns all recovered and it was ascertained that they had suffered from the unsentimental circumstance of eating food that did not agree with them.

On Friday, in company with my fair countrywoman, I visited the convent of La Concepción for the purpose of embracing a nun, or rather the nun who had taken the black veil. The room adjoining the locutory of the convent was crowded, and she was standing in the doorway with the crown on her head and a doll in her hand. It was the last time her friends could see her face; but this puerile exhibition of the doll detracted from the sentiment. It was an occasion that addressed itself particularly to ladies; some wondered that one so young should abandon a world to them beaming with bright and beautiful prospects; others, for whom the dreams of life had passed, looked upon her retirement as the part of wisdom. They embraced her and retired to make room for others. By her side was a black nun, with a veil so thick that not a lineament of her face could be seen, whom my countrywoman had known during her own seclusion in the convent; she described her as young, of exceeding beauty and loveliness, and around her she threw a charm which almost awakened a spirit of romance. I would have made some sacrifice for one glimpse of her face.

Before our turn came there was an irruption of those objects of my detestation, the eternal soldiers, who, leaving



their muskets at the door, forced their way through the crowd, and presenting themselves—though respectfully—for an embrace, retired. At length our turn came; my fair companion embraced her and, after many farewell words, recommended me as her countryman. I had never had much practice in embracing nuns; in fact, it was the first time I ever attempted such a thing, but it came as natural as if I had been brought up to it. My right arm encircled her neck, her right arm mine; I rested my head upon her shoulder, and she hers upon mine; but a friend's grandmother never received a more respectful embrace. "Stolen joys are always dearest"; there were too many looking on. The grating closed, and the face of the nun will never be seen again.

That afternoon Carrera returned to the city. I was extremely desirous to know him, and I made an arrangement with Mr. Pavón to call upon him the next day. At ten o'clock the next morning Mr. Pavón called for me. I was advised that this formidable chief would be taken by external show, so I put on the diplomatic coat with a great profusion of buttons which had produced such an effect at Copán, and which, by the way, owing to the abominable state of the country, I never had an opportunity of wearing afterward; the cost of the coat was a dead loss.

Carrera was living in a small house in a retired street. Sentinels were at the door, and eight or ten soldiers were basking in the sun outside; they were part of a bodyguard, who had been fitted out with red bombazet jackets and tartan plaid caps, and they made a much better appearance than any of his soldiers I had before seen. Along the corridor was a row of muskets, bright and in good order. We entered a small room adjoining the *sala*, and saw Carrera sitting at a table counting money.

Ever since my arrival in the country this name of terror had been ringing in my ears. Mr. Montgomery, to whom I have before referred, and who arrived in Central America about a year before me, says, "An insurrection, I was told, had taken place among the Indians, who, under the directions of a man called Carrera, were ravaging the country and committing all kinds of excesses. Along the coast, and in

some of the departments, tranquillity had not been disturbed; but in the interior there was no safety for the traveller, and every avenue to the capital was beset by parties of brigands, who showed no mercy to their victims, especially if they were foreigners." In referring to the posture of affairs at his departure he adds, "It is probable, however, that while this is being written, the active measures of General Morazán for putting down the insurrection have been successful, and that the career of this rebel hero has been brought to a close." But the career of the "rebel hero" was not brought to a close; the "man called Carrera" was now absolute master of Guatemala; and, if I am not deceived, he is destined to become more conspicuous than any other leader who has yet risen in the convulsions of Spanish America.<sup>1</sup>

He is a native of one of the wards of Guatemala City. His friends, in compliment, call him a mulatto; I, for the same reason, call him an Indian, considering that the better blood of the two. In 1829 he had been a drummer boy in Colonel Aycinena's regiment. When the Liberal or Democratic Party prevailed and General Morazán entered the city, Carrera broke his drum and retired to the village of Mataquescuintla. Here he entered into business as a pig driver, and for several years he continued in this respectable occupation, probably as free as one of his own pigs from any dreams of future greatness. The excesses of political parties, severe exactions for the support of government, encroachments upon the property of the Church, and innovations, particularly the introduction of the Livingston Code, which established trial by jury and made marriage a civil contract, created discontent throughout the country. The last gave great offence to the clergy, who exercised an unbounded influence over the minds of the Indians.

In 1837 the cholera, which, in its destructive march over the habitable world had hitherto spared this portion of the American continent, made its terrible appearance, and, besides strewing the land with dead, proved to be the imme-

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1. From 1840 until his death in 1865 Carrera was the strong man of Guatemala. Elected president in 1847 and re-elected in 1851, he was in 1854 named president for life.

diate cause of political convulsions. The priests persuaded the Indians that the foreigners had poisoned the waters. Gálvez, who was at that time the chief of the state, sent into all the villages medicines which, being ignorantly administered, sometimes produced fatal consequences; and the priests, always opposed to the Liberal Party, persuaded the Indians that the government was endeavoring to poison and destroy their race. The Indians became excited all over the country and, in Mataquescuintla, they rose in mass, with Carrera at their head, crying *Viva la Religión, y muerte a los extranjeros!* The first blow was struck by murdering the judges appointed under the Livingston Code. Gálvez sent a commission with detachments of cavalry and a white flag to hear their complaints, but while conferring with the insurgents, they were surrounded and almost all of them cut to pieces. The number of the disaffected increased to more than a thousand, and Gálvez sent against them six hundred troops, who routed them, plundered and burned their villages, and, among other excesses, perpetrated the last outrage upon Carrera's wife. Roused to fury by this personal wrong, he joined with several chiefs of villages, vowing never to lay down his arms while an officer of Morazán remained in the state. With a few infuriated followers he went from village to village, killing the judges and government officers. When pursued, he escaped to the mountains, begging tortillas at the haciendas for his men, and sparing and protecting all who assisted him.

At this time he could neither read nor write; but, urged on and assisted by some priests, particularly one Padre Lobo, a notorious profligate, he issued a proclamation, with his name stamped at the foot of it, against strangers and the government, for attempting to poison the Indians. He demanded the destruction of all foreigners except the Spaniards, the abolition of the Livingston Code, a recall of the archbishop and friars, the expulsion of heretics, and a restoration of the privileges of the Church and old usages and customs. His fame spread as a highwayman and murderer. The roads about Guatemala were unsafe and all traveling was broken up; the merchants were thrown into consternation

by intelligence that the whole of the goods sent to the fair at Esquipulas had fallen into his hands (which, however, proved untrue). Very soon he became so strong that he attacked villages and even towns.

The reader will bear in mind that this was in the State of Guatemala. The Liberal Party was dominant, but at this critical moment a fatal division took place among its members; Barundia, a leading member, disappointed of a high office for a profligate relative, deserted the administration and appeared in the Assembly at the head of the opposition. Party distraction and the rising of Carrera stirred up all who were dissatisfied with the government; the citizens of Antigua, about twenty-five miles distant, sent a petition to the Assembly for a decree of amnesty for political offences, which would allow exiles to return and redress other grievances. A deputation of the Assembly was sent to confer with them. It returned unsuccessful, and the Antiguans threatened to march against Guatemala.

On Sunday, the twentieth of February 1838, proclamations of the Antiguans were found strewed in the streets, and there was a general alarm that they were on their march to attack the city. The troops of the general government (less than five hundred in number) and the militia were mustered; cannon were placed at the corners of the square and sentinels in the streets; and General Prem published a bando, calling upon all citizens to take up arms. Gálvez, the chief of the state, mounted his horse, and rode through the streets, endeavoring to rouse the citizens, and giving out that Morazán was on his march and had defeated three hundred of Carrera's gang.

On Monday all business was suspended. Gálvez, in great perplexity, reinstated some officers who had been dismissed; he appointed Mexía, a Spaniard, lieutenant-colonel, which gave such disgust that Prem and all the officers sent in their resignations. Gálvez begged and implored them to continue, reconciling himself to each individually; and at length, on his revoking the commission of Mexía, they consented. At two o'clock it was rumored that Carrera had joined the Antiguans. Prem published a decree that all males from four-

teen to sixty, except priests and persons laboring under physical imbecility, should take up arms. At nine o'clock at night there was an alarm that a party of Carrera's gang was at the Aycetuna.<sup>2</sup> The square was again garrisoned, and sentinels and cannons placed at the corners of the streets. To add to the excitement, during the night the provisor died, and news was received that the Livingston Code had been publicly burned at Chiquimula and that the town had declared itself against Gálvez. On Wednesday morning fosses were commenced at the corners of the public square; but on Thursday the Marquis of Aycinena, the leader of the Central Party, by a conference with the divided Liberals, succeeded in inducing a majority of deputies to sign a convention of amnesty, which gave general satisfaction.

On Friday morning the city was perfectly quiet. But by midday this calm proved to be only the forerunner of a dreadful storm. The troops of the Federal government, the only reliable force, revolted; with bayonets fixed, colors flying, and cannon in front, they left the barracks and marched into the plaza. They refused to ratify the convention by which, it was represented to them, Gálvez was to be deposed and Valenzuela, the vice-chief and a tool of Barundia, appointed in his stead. They refused to serve under any of the opposition and said they could give protection and had no occasion to ask it. Deputies were cited to attend a meeting of the Assembly, but they were afraid to convene. The officers had a conference with the soldiers and Merino, a sergeant, drew up a document requiring that President Morazán be sent for, Gálvez to remain chief until his arrival. This was assented to. Deputies were sent requesting Morazán to come to Guatemala, and also to Antigua, to explain the circumstances of violating the convention, but the deputies were unsuccessful.

The same night the alarm bell announced the approach of eight hundred men to attack the city. The militia were called to arms, but only about forty appeared. At half past five

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2. In spite of extensive searching, the editor finds it impossible to identify "Aycetuna."

Gálvez formed the government troops and, accompanied by Prem, marched from the plaza to meet the rebels. But before he reached the gate a conspiracy broke out among the troops, and with the cry *Viva el General Merino, y muera el Jefe del Estado, que nos ha vendido—fuego, muchachos!* (Long live General Merino, and die the chief of the state, who has sold us—fire, boys!) the infantry fired upon the *état-major*. A ball passed through Prem's hat; Gálvez was thrown from his horse, but he escaped and took refuge behind the altar of the Church of La Concepción. Yáñez, a cavalry officer, succeeded in dispersing the troops with his cavalry; he returned to the square, leaving fifteen dead in the street. Merino, with about a hundred and twenty men, took possession of the small fieldpiece of the battalion, and stationed himself in the square of Guadalupe. Parties of the dispersed troops remained out all night, firing their muskets and keeping the city in a state of alarm; but Yáñez saved it from plunder by patrolling with his cavalry. In the morning Merino asked permission to march into the plaza. His numbers had increased by the return of straggling parties; but, on forming in the plaza, he and three or four ring-leaders were ordered to leave the ranks, and were sent to prison in the convent of Santo Domingo, where, on Monday afternoon, he was tied to a stake in his cell and shot. His grave at the foot of the stake and his blood spattered on the wall were among the curiosities shown to me in Guatemala.

On Sunday morning the bells again sounded the alarm; the rebel Antiguans were at the old gate, and commissioners were sent out to treat with them. They demanded an evacuation of the plaza by the soldiers, but the soldiers answered, indignantly, that the rebels might come and take the square. Prem softened this into an answer that they could not surrender to rebels, and at about half past twelve at night the attack commenced. The rebels scattered in the suburbs, wasting powder and bullets, and in the morning Yáñez, with seventy cavalry, made a sally and, routing three hundred of them, returned into the plaza with lances reeking with blood. Probably, if he had been seconded by the citizens, he would have driven them all posthaste back to Antigua.

On Wednesday Carrera joined the rebels. He had sent his emissaries to the villages to rouse the Indians, promising them the plunder of Guatemala; and on Thursday, with a tumultuous mass of half-naked savages, men, women, and children, estimated at ten or twelve thousand, he presented himself at the gate of the city. The Antiguans themselves were struck with consternation, and the citizens of Guatemala were thrown into a state bordering on distraction. Commissioners were again sent out to treat with Carrera, who demanded the deposition of Gálvez, the evacuation of the plaza by the Federal troops, and a free passage into the city. Probably, even at this time, if the Federal troops had been supported by the citizens, they could have resisted the entry; but the consternation and the fear of exasperating the rebellious hordes were so great that nothing was thought of but submission. The Assembly met in terror and distraction, and the result was an assent to all that was demanded.

At five o'clock the small band of government troops evacuated the plaza. The infantry, amounting to three hundred, marched out by the Calle Real, or Royal Street. The cavalry, seventy in number exclusive of officers, on their march through another street, met an aide-de-camp of Carrera, who ordered them to lay down their arms. Yáñez answered that he must first see his general; but the dragoons, suspecting some treachery on the part of Valenzuela, became panic-stricken and fled. Yáñez, with thirty-five men, galloped through the city and escaped by the road to Mixco. The rest rushed back into the plaza, threw down their lances in disgust, dismounted, and disappeared; not a single man was left under arms.

In the meantime Carrera's hordes were advancing. The commandant of the Antiguans asked him if he had his masses divided into squares or companies to which Carrera answered, *No entiendo nada de eso. Todo es uno.* (I don't understand anything of that. It is all the same.) Among his leaders were Monreal and other known outlaws, criminals, robbers, and murderers. He himself was on horseback, with a green bush in his hat, which was hung round with pieces of dirty cotton cloth covered with pictures of saints. A gentle-

man who saw them from the roof of his house, and who was familiar with all the scenes of terror which had taken place in that unhappy city, told me that he never felt such consternation and horror as when he saw the entry of this immense mass of barbarians. Choking up the streets, all with green bushes in their hats, they seemed to him at a distance like a moving forest. They were armed with rusty muskets, old pistols, fowling pieces, some with locks and some without; they carried sticks formed into the shape of muskets, with tin-plate locks, and clubs, machetes, and knives tied to the ends of long poles. And swelling the multitude were two or three thousand women, with sacks and alforjas for carrying away the plunder. Many, who had never left their villages before, looked wild at the sight of the houses and churches, and the magnificence of the city. They entered the plaza, vociferating *Viva la religión, y muerte a los extranjeros!* Carrera himself, amazed at the immense ball he had set in motion, was so embarrassed that he could not guide his horse. He afterward said that he was frightened at the difficulty of controlling this huge and disorderly mass. The traitor Barundia, the leader of the opposition, the Catile of this rebellion, rode by his side on his entry into the plaza.

At sundown the whole multitude set up the *Salve*, or Hymn to the Virgin. The swell of human voices filled the air and made the hearts of the inhabitants quake with fear. Carrera entered the cathedral; the Indians, in mute astonishment at its magnificence, thronged in after him and set up around the beautiful altar the uncouth images of their village saints. Monreal broke into the house of General Prem and seized a uniform coat richly embroidered with gold, into which Carrera slipped his arms, still wearing his straw hat with its green bush. A watch was brought him, but he did not know the use of it. Probably, since the invasion of Rome by Alaric and the Goths, no civilized city was ever visited by such an inundation of barbarians.

And Carrera alone had power to control the wild elements around him. As soon as possible some of the authorities sought him out and in the most abject terms begged him



to state on what conditions he would evacuate the city. He demanded the deposition of Gálvez, the chief of the state, all the money, and all the arms the government could command. The priests were the only people who had any influence with him, and words cannot convey any idea of the awful state of suspense which the city suffered, dreading every moment to hear the signal given for general pillage and massacre. The inhabitants shut themselves up in their houses, which, being built of stone, with iron balconies to the windows and doors several inches thick, resisted the assaults of straggling parties; but atrocities more than enough were committed, preliminary, as it seemed, to a general sacking. The vice-president of the republic was murdered. The house of Flores, a deputy, was sacked and his mother knocked down by a villain with the butt of a musket, and one of his daughters shot in the arm with two balls.

The house of Messrs. Klee, Skinner, & Co., the principal foreign merchants in Guatemala, which was reported to contain ammunition and arms, was several times attacked with great ferocity; having strong balconied windows, and the door being secured by bales of merchandise piled up within, it resisted the assaults of an undisciplined mob armed only with clubs, muskets, knives, and machetes. The priests ran through the streets bearing the crucifix, in the name of the Virgin and saints restraining the lawless Indians, stilling the wildness of passion, and saving the terrified inhabitants. And I cannot help mentioning one whose name was in everybody's mouth, Mr. Charles Savage, at that time United States consul, who, in the midst of the most furious assault upon Mr. Klee's house, rushed down the street under a shower of bullets and, knocking up bayonets and machetes, drove the mob back from the door. Branding them as robbers and murderers, with his white hair streaming in the wind, he poured out such a torrent of indignation and contempt that the Indians, amazed at his audacity, desisted. After this, with an almost wanton exposure of life, he was seen in the midst of every mob; to the astonishment of everybody, he was not killed. The foreign residents pre-

sented him with a unanimous letter of thanks for his fearless and successful exertions in the protection of life and property.

Pending the negotiation, Carrera, dressed in Prem's uniform, endeavored to restrain his tumultuous followers; but several times he said that he could not himself resist the temptation to sack Klee's house, and those of the other *ingleses*. There was a strange dash of fanaticism in the character of this lawless chieftain. The battle cry of his hordes was *Viva la religión!* The palace of the archbishop had been suffered to be used as a theatre by the Liberals; Carrera demanded the keys and, putting them in his pocket, declared that, to prevent any future pollution, it should not be opened again until the banished archbishop returned to occupy it.

At length the terms upon which he consented to withdraw were agreed upon: eleven thousand dollars in silver, ten thousand to be distributed among his followers, and one thousand for his own share; a thousand muskets; and a commission as lieutenant-colonel for himself. The amount of money was small as the price of relief from such imminent danger, but it was an immense sum in the eyes of Carrera and his followers, few of whom were worth more than the rags on their backs and the stolen arms in their hands. But even this sum was not easily raised; the treasury was bankrupt, and the money was not very cheerfully contributed by the citizens. The madness of consenting to put in the hands of Carrera a thousand muskets was only equaled by the absurdity of making him a lieutenant-colonel.

On the afternoon of the third day the money was paid, the muskets delivered, and Carrera was invested with the command of the province of Mita, a district near Guatemala City. The joy of the inhabitants at the prospect of his immediate departure was without bounds. But at the last moment an awful rumor spread that the wild bands had evinced an uncontrollable eagerness to sack the city before leaving. A random discharge of muskets in the plaza confirmed this rumor, and the effect was dreadful. An hour of terrible suspense followed, but at five o'clock Carrera and his men filed

off in straggling crowds from the plaza. At the Plaza de Toros they halted and, firing their muskets in the air, created another panic. Again a rumor was revived that Carrera had demanded four thousand dollars more, and that, unless he received it, he would return and take it by force. Carrera himself did actually return and demand a fieldpiece, which was given him. But, at length, leaving behind him a document requiring the redress of certain grievances, to the unspeakable joy of all the inhabitants, he left the city.

The delight of the citizens at being relieved from the pressure of immediate danger was indeed great, but there was no return of confidence, and, unhappily, no healing of political animosities. Valenzuela was appointed chief of the state; the Assembly renewed its distracted sessions; Barundia, as the head of the now ministerial party, proposed to abolish all the unconstitutional decrees of Gálvez; money was wanted, and recourse to the old system of forced loans had to be taken. This exasperated the moneyed men; and in the midst of discord and confusion news was received that Quezaltenango, one of the departments of Guatemala, had seceded and declared itself a separate state. At this time, too, the government received a letter from Carrera, stating that he had been informed since his arrival at Mataquescuintla that people spoke ill of him in the capital, and if they continued to do so he had four thousand men, and would return and put things right. From time to time he sent a message to the same effect by some straggling Indian who happened to pass through his village. Afterward it was reported that his followers had renounced his authority and commenced operations on their own account, threatening the city with another invasion, determined, according to their proclamations, to exterminate the whites and establish a government of *pardos libres* (free tigers) <sup>3</sup> and enjoy in their own right the lands which had devolved upon them by their emancipation from the dominion of the whites. To the honor of

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3. Stephens has probably mistranslated *pardo*. In various parts of Latin America it means "mestizo" or "mulatto."

Guatemala, a single spark of spirit broke forth, and men of all classes took up arms; but it was a single flash and soon died away.

Again intelligence arrived that Carrera himself had sent out his emissaries to summon his hordes for another march upon the city. Several families received private information and advice to seek safety in flight. Hundreds of people did so, and the roads were crowded with processions of mules, horses, and Indians loaded with luggage. On Sunday everybody was going, and early on Monday morning guards were placed at the barriers. Hundreds of passports were applied for and refused. Again a decree was published that all should take up arms, and the militia were again mustered. At ten o'clock on Tuesday night it was said that Carrera was at Palencia, at eleven that he had gone to suppress an insurrection of his own bandits, and on Wednesday night that he was at a place called Canales. On Sunday, the fourth of March, a review took place of about seven hundred men. Antigua sent three hundred and fifty muskets and ammunition, which they did not consider it prudent to keep, as there had been cries of *muera Guatemala, y viva Carrera!* and placards, bearing the same ominous words, posted on the walls. At this time a letter was received from Carrera by the government, advising them to disband their troops, and assuring them that he was collecting forces only to destroy a party of four hundred rebels, headed by one Gálvez (the former chief of the state, whom he had deposed), and requesting two cannon and more ammunition. At another time, probably supposing that the government must be interested in his fortunes, he sent word that he had narrowly escaped being assassinated. Monreal had taken advantage of an opportunity, seduced his men, tied him to a tree, and was in the very act of having him shot, when his brother Laureano Carrera rushed in and ran Monreal through with his bayonet. The government now conceived the project of inducing his followers, by the influence of the priests, to surrender their arms on paying them five dollars apiece; but very soon he was heard of stronger than ever, occupying all the

roads and sending in imperious proclamations to the government. At length the news came that he was actually marching upon the city.

At this time, to the unspeakable joy of the inhabitants, General Morazán, the President of the Republic, arrived from San Salvador with fifteen hundred men. But party spirit was even yet dominant. General Morazán encamped a few leagues from the city, hesitating to enter it or to employ the forces of the general government in putting down a revolution in the state except with the consent of the state government. The state government was jealous of the Federal government, tenacious of prerogatives it had not the courage to defend. It demanded from the President a plan of his campaign; it also passed a decree offering Carrera and his followers fifteen days to lay down their arms. But General Morazán would not permit the decree to be published at his headquarters, and two days later, it was annulled and the President of the Republic authorized to act as circumstances might require.

During this time one of Morazán's pickets had been cut off and the officers murdered, which created a great excitement among his soldiers. Anxious to avoid shedding more blood, he sent into the city for the Canónigo Castillo and Barundia, deputing them as commissioners to persuade the bandits to surrender their arms, even offering to pay fifteen dollars a head rather than come to extremities. The commissioners found Carrera at one of his old haunts among the mountains of Mataquescuintla surrounded by hordes of Indians living upon tortillas. The traitor Barundia had been received by Morazán's soldiers with groans, and his poor jaded horse had been tied up at Morazán's camp a day and a half without a blade of grass. As a further reward of his treason, Carrera refused to meet him under a roof, because, as he said, he did not wish to plunge his new lance, a present from a priest, into Barundia's breast.

The meeting took place in the open air and on the top of a mountain. Carrera refused to lay down his arms unless all his former demands were complied with and unless also the Indian capitation tax was reduced to one-third of its amount;

but he softened his asperity against foreigners to the demand that only those not married should be expelled from the country, and that thereafter they should be permitted to traffic only, and not to settle in it. The atrocious priest Padre Lobo, his constant friend and adviser, was with him. The arguments of the Canónigo Castillo, particularly in regard to the folly of charging the government with an attempt to poison the Indians, were listened to with much attention by them, but Carrera broke up the conference by asserting vehemently that the government had offered him twenty dollars a head for every Indian he poisoned.

All hope of compromise was now at an end, and General Morazán marched directly to Mataquescuintla; but before he reached it Carrera's bands had disappeared among the mountains. He heard of them in another place, devastating the country, desolating villages and towns, and again before his troops could reach them, the muskets were concealed and the Indians either in the mountains or quietly working in the fields. Mr. Hall, the British vice-consul, received a letter from eleven British subjects of Salamá, a distance of three days' journey, stating that they had been seized at night by a party of Carrera's troops, stripped of everything, confined two nights and a day without food, and sentenced to be shot, but that they had finally been ordered to leave the country, which they were then doing, destitute of everything and begging their way to the port. A few nights after, at ten o'clock, the cannon of alarm was sounded in the city, and it was reported that Carrera was again at the gates.

All this time party strife was as violent as ever: the Centralists trembling with apprehension but in their hearts rejoicing at the distraction of the country under the administration of the Liberals, and rejoicing that one had risen up capable of inspiring the Liberals with terror, and the divided Liberals hating each other with a more intense hate even than the Centralists bore them. Finally, the excitement became so great that all the parties drew up separate petitions to General Morazán, representing the deplorable state of insecurity, and begging him to enter the city and provide for its safety. Separate sets of deputies hurried to anticipate

each other at General Morazán's headquarters and to pay court to him by being the first to ask for his protection. General Morazán had become acquainted with the distracted condition of the city, and was in the act of mounting his horse when the deputies arrived. On Sunday he entered with an escort of two hundred soldiers, amid the ringing of bells, firing of cannon, and other demonstrations of joy.

The same day the merchants, with the Marquis of Aycinena and others of the Central Party, presented a petition representing the dreadful state of public feeling, and requesting Morazán to depose the state authorities, to assume the reins of government, and to convoke a Constituent Assembly, as the only means of saving Guatemala from utter ruin. In the evening, deputies from the different branches of the Liberal Party had long conferences with the President. Morazán answered all that he wished to act legally, and that he would communicate with the Assembly the next day and be governed by their decision. The proceedings in the Assembly are too afflicting and disgraceful to dwell upon. So far as I can understand the party strife of that time (after wading through papers and pamphlets emanating from both sides), General Morazán conducted himself with probity and honor. The Centralists made a desperate effort to attach him to them, but he would not accept the offered embrace, nor the sycophantic service of men who had always opposed him; nor would he sustain what he believed to be wrong in his own partisans.

In the meantime Carrera was gaining ground; he had routed several detachments of the Federal troops, massacred men, and increased his stock of ammunition and arms. At length all agreed that something must be done; and at a final meeting of the Assembly, with a feeling of desperation, it was decreed without debate: (1) that the state government should retire to Antigua; and (2) that the President, in person or by delegate, should govern the district according to Article 176 of the Constitution.

Amid these scenes within the city, and rumors of worse from without, on Sunday night a ball was given to Morazán; the Centralists, displeased at his not acceding to their over-

tures, did not attend. Gálvez, the chief deposed by Carrera, made his first appearance since his deposition and danced the whole time.

Though Morazán was irresolute in the cabinet, he was all energy in the field; and being now invested with full power, he sustained his high reputation as a skillful soldier. The bulletin of the army for May and June exhibits the track of Carrera as he devastated villages and towns, and the close pursuit of the government troops who beat him wherever they found him but who were never able to secure his person. In the meantime party jealousies continued and the state government was in a state of anarchy. The Assembly could not meet, because, since the state party was not attending, it was incumbent on the vice-chief to retire and his place to be taken by the oldest counsellor, and there was no such official, for the term of the council had expired and no new elections had been held. While Morazán was dispersing the wild bands of Carrera, and relieving the Guatemalans from the danger which had brought them to their knees before him, the old jealousies revived; incendiary publications were issued, charging him with exhausting the country to support idle soldiers, and of keeping the city in subjection by bayonets.

About the first of July General Morazán considered Guatemala relieved from all external danger and returned to El Salvador, leaving troops in various towns under the command of Carvallo, and appointing Carlos Salazar commandant in the city. Carrera was supposed to be completely put down; and to bring things to a close, Carvallo published the following:

#### NOTICE

The person or persons who may deliver the criminal Rafael Carrera, dead or alive (if he does not present himself voluntarily under the last pardon), shall receive a reward of fifteen hundred dollars and two *caballerías* of land, and pardon for any crime he has committed.

The general-in-chief,  
J. N. CARVALLO

Guatemala, July 20, 1838



But the "criminal" Carrera, the proscribed outlaw, was not yet put down; one by one, he surprised detachments of Federal troops. And while the city exhibited the fierceness of party spirit, complained of forced loans and the expense of maintaining idle soldiers, he made plans to abolish the state government and form a provisional junta, and to organize a Constituent Assembly with M. Rivera Paz at its head. With still increasing numbers, he attacked Amatitlán, took Antigua, and, barely waiting to sack a few houses, stripped it of cannon, muskets, and ammunition, and again marched against Guatemala, proclaiming his intention to raze every house to the ground and to murder every white inhabitant.

The consternation in the city cannot be conceived. General Morazán was again solicited to come. A line in pencil was received from him by a man who carried it sewed up in the sleeve of his coat, urging the city to defend itself and to try to hold out for a few days. But the danger was too imminent. Salazar, at the head of the Federal troops (the idle soldiers complained of), marched out at two o'clock in the morning and, aided by a thick fog, came upon Carrera suddenly at Villa Nueva, killed four hundred and fifty of his men, and completely routed him, Carrera himself being badly wounded in the thigh. The city was thus saved from destruction. The next day Morazán entered the city with a thousand men. The shock of the immense danger which they had escaped was not yet over; on the morrow it might return. Party jealousies were scared away, and all looked to General Morazán as the only man who could effectually save them from Carrera, and they begged him to accept the office of dictator.

About the same time Guzmán, the general of Quezaltenango, arrived with seven hundred men, and General Morazán made formidable arrangements to enclose and crush the *Cachurecos*.<sup>4</sup> The result was the same as before: Carrera was constantly beaten but as constantly escaped.

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4. The Liberals applied this name to the Conservatives. Here *Cachurecos* refers to Carrera and his forces, by means of which the Conservatives came to power.

His followers were scattered, his best men taken and shot, and he himself was pinned up and almost starved on the top of a mountain, with a cordon of soldiers around its base, and only escaped by the remissness of the guard. In three months, chased from place to place, his old haunts broken up, and hemmed in on every side, he entered into a treaty with Guzmán by which he agreed to deliver up one thousand muskets and to disband his remaining followers. In executing the treaty, however, he delivered only four hundred muskets, and those old and worthless; Guzmán merely winked at this breach of the convention, little dreaming of the terrible fate reserved for himself at Carrera's hands.

This over, Morazán deposed Rivera Paz, restored Salazar, and again returned to El Salvador, first laying heavy contributions on the city to support the expense of the war, and taking with him all the soldiers of the Federal government, belying one of the party cries against him that he was attempting to retain an influence in the city by bayonets. Guzmán returned to Quezaltenango, and the garrison consisted only of seventy men.

The contributions, and the withdrawal of the troops from the city, created great dissatisfaction with Morazán, and the political horizon became cloudy throughout the Republic. The Marquis of Aycinena, who, banished by Morazán, had resided several years in the United States studying our institutions, hurried on the crisis by a series of articles which were widely circulated and which purported to illustrate our constitution and laws. Honduras and Costa Rica declared their independence of the general government, and in Guatemala all this added fuel to the already flaming fire of dissension.

On the twenty-fourth of March, 1839, Carrera issued a bulletin from his old quarters in Mataquescuintla, in which, referring to the declaration of independence by the States, he said: "When those laws came to my hands, I read them and returned to them very often; as a loving mother clasps in her arms an only son whom she believed lost and presses him against her heart, so did I with the pamphlet that contained the declaration; for in it I found the principles that

I sustain and the reforms I desire." This was rather figurative, as Carrera could not at that time read; but it must have been quite new to him and a satisfaction to find out what principles he sustained. Again he threatened to enter the city.

All was anarchy and distraction in the councils, when on the twelfth of April his hordes appeared before the gates. All were aghast, but there was no rising to repel him. Morazán was beyond the reach of their voices, and they who had been loudest in denouncing him for attempting to control the city by bayonets, now denounced him for leaving them to the mercy of Carrera. All who could, hid away their treasures and fled; the rest shut themselves up in their houses, barring their doors and windows. At two o'clock in the morning, routing the guard, Carrera entered with fifteen hundred men. Salazar, the commandant, fled, and Carrera, riding up to the house of Rivera Paz, knocked at the door and reinstalled him as chief of the state. His soldiers took up their quarters in the barracks, and Carrera established himself as the guardian of the city; it is due to him to say that he acknowledged his own incompetency to govern and placed men at the disposition of the municipality to preserve the peace. The Central Party was thus restored to power.

Carrera's fanaticism bound him to the Church party; he was flattered by his association and connection with the aristocracy, who made him a brigadier general and presented him with a handsome uniform. Besides these empty honors, he had the city barracks and pay for his men, which was better than Indian huts and foraging expeditions. The league had continued since the April preceding my arrival. The great bond of union was hatred of Morazán and the Liberals. The Centralists had their Constituent Assembly; they abolished the laws made by the Liberals, and revived old Spanish laws and old names for the courts of justice and officers of government, and they passed any laws they pleased so long as they did not interfere with him. Their great difficulty was to keep him quiet. Unable to remain inactive in the city, he marched toward El Salvador for the

ostensible purpose of attacking General Morazán. This put the Centralists in a state of great anxiety; Carrera's success or his defeat was alike dangerous to them. If he was defeated, Morazán might march directly upon the city and take signal vengeance upon them; if successful, he might return with his barbarians so intoxicated by victory as to be utterly uncontrollable.

A little circumstance shows the position of things. Carrera's mother, an old woman well known as a huckster on the plaza, died. Formerly it was the custom with the higher classes to bury their dead in vaults constructed within the churches; but from the time of the cholera, all burials, without distinction, were forbidden in the churches and even within the city, and a *campo santo* was established outside the town, in which all the principal families had vaults. Carrera signified his pleasure that his mother should be buried in the Cathedral! The government charged itself with the funeral and issued cards of invitation; all the principal inhabitants followed in the procession. No efforts were spared to conciliate and keep Carrera in good temper; but he was subject to violent bursts of passion, and, it was said, that he had cautioned the members of the government at such moments not to attempt to argue with him, but to let him have his own way. Such was Carrera at the time of my visit—more absolute master of Guatemala than any king in Europe of his dominions, and by the fanatic Indians called *el Hijo de Dios*, the Son of God, and *nuestro Señor*, our Lord.

When I entered the room he was sitting at a table counting sixpenny and shilling pieces. Colonel Monte Rosa, a dark mestizo in a dashing uniform, was sitting by his side, and several other persons were in the room. Carrera was about five feet six inches in height, with straight black hair and an Indian complexion and expression; he wore a black bombazet roundabout jacket and pantaloons. He was without beard, and did not seem to be more than twenty-one years old. As we entered, he rose and pushed the money to one side of the table and, probably out of respect to my coat, received me with courtesy and gave me a chair at his side.

My first remark was an expression of surprise at his extreme youth; he answered that he was but twenty-three years old—certainly he was not more than twenty-five. Then, as a man conscious that he was something extraordinary and that I knew it, without waiting for any leading questions he continued that he had begun (he did not say what) with thirteen men armed with old muskets, which they were obliged to fire with cigars. He pointed to eight places in which he had been wounded, and said that he had three balls then in his body.

It was hard to recognize in him the man who, less than two years before, had entered Guatemala with a horde of wild Indians, proclaiming death to strangers. Indeed, in no particular had he changed more than in his opinion of foreigners, a happy illustration of the effect of personal intercourse in the breaking down of prejudices against individuals or classes. He had become personally acquainted with several, and one, an English doctor, had extracted a ball from his side. His intercourse with all had been so satisfactory that his feelings had undergone an entire revulsion; he said that they were the only people who never deceived him. He had done, too, what I consider extraordinary: in the intervals of his hurried life he had learned to write his name and had thrown aside his stamp.

I never had the fortune to be presented to any legitimate king, nor to any usurper of the prerogatives of royalty except Mohammed Ali, to whom, old as he was, I gave some good advice; it grieves me that the old lion is now shorn of his mane. Considering Carrera a promising young man, I told him that he had a long career before him and might do much good to his country. Laying his hand upon his heart, with a burst of feeling that I did not expect, he said that he was determined to sacrifice his life for his country. With all his faults and his crimes, none ever accused him of duplicity or of saying what he did not mean; perhaps, as many self-deceiving men have done before him, he believes himself a patriot.

I considered that he was destined to exercise an important, if not a controlling influence on the affairs of Central Amer-

ica, and trusting that hopes of honorable and extended fame might have some effect upon his character, I told him that his name had already reached my country and that I had seen in our newspapers an account of his last entry into Guatemala, with praises of his moderation and his exertions to prevent atrocities. He expressed himself pleased that his name was known and that such mention was made of him among strangers, and said he was not a robber and murderer, as he was called by his enemies. He seemed intelligent and capable of improvement, and I told him that he ought to travel into other countries, and particularly, from its contiguity, into mine. He had a very indefinite notion as to where my country was; he knew it only as *El Norte*, or the North, and inquired about the distance and facility for getting there, adding that, when the wars were over, he would endeavor to make *El Norte* a visit.

But he could not fix his thoughts upon anything except the wars and Morazán; in fact, he knew of nothing else. He was boyish in his manners and manner of speaking, but very grave; he never smiled, and, conscious of power, was unostentatious in the exhibition of it, though he always spoke in the first person of what he had done and what he intended to do. One of the hangers-on, evidently to pay court to him, looked for a paper bearing his signature to show me as a specimen of his handwriting, but did not find one. My interview with him was much more interesting than I had expected. So young, so humble in his origin, so destitute of early advantages, with honest impulses, perhaps, but ignorant, fanatic, sanguinary, and the slave of violent passions, he wielded absolutely the physical force of the country, and that force entertained a natural hatred of the whites. At parting he accompanied me to the door, and in the presence of his villainous soldiers made me a free offer of his services. I understood that I had had the good fortune to make a favorable impression; later, but unluckily during my absence, he called upon me in full dress and in state, which for him was an unusual thing.

At that time, as Don Manuel Pavón told me, Carrera professed to consider himself a brigadier general, subject

to the orders of the government. He had no regular allowance for the maintenance of himself and troops. He did not like keeping accounts and called for money when he wanted it; but, with this understanding, in eight months he had not required more than Morazán did in two. He really did not want money for himself, and as a matter of policy he paid the Indians but little. This operated powerfully with the aristocracy, upon whom the whole burden of raising money devolved. It may be a satisfaction to some of my friends, however, to know that this lawless chief was under a dominion to which meeker men are loth to submit: his wife accompanied him on horseback in all his expeditions, influenced by a feeling which is said to proceed sometimes from excess of affection (I have heard that it is no unimportant part of the business of the chief of the state to settle family jars).

As we were returning to my house, we met a gentleman who told Mr. Pavón that a party of soldiers was searching for a member of the Assembly who was lying under the displeasure of Carrera, but who was a personal friend of theirs. As we passed on, we saw a file of soldiers drawn up before his door, while others were inside searching the house. This was being done by Carrera's personal orders, without any knowledge on the part of the government.

## Chapter XII



*Party to Mixco. A scene of pleasure. Procession in honor of the patron saint of Mixco. Fireworks. A bombardment. Smoking cigars. A night brawl. Suffering and sorrow. A cockfight. A walk in the suburbs. Sunday amusements. Return to the city.*

IN consequence of the convulsions and danger of the times, the city was dull, and there was no gaiety in private circles. But an effort had been made by some enterprising ladies to break the monotony, and a party, to which I was invited, was formed for that afternoon to go to Mixco, an Indian village about three leagues distant, where on the following day the festival of its patron saint was to be celebrated with Indian rites.

At four o'clock in the afternoon I left my door on horseback to call on Don Manuel Pavón. His house was next to that of the proscribed deputy, and a line of soldiers had been drawn around the whole block to prevent an escape while every house was being searched. I always gave these gentlemen a wide berth when I could, but it was necessary to ride along the whole line. As I passed the house of the deputy, with the door closed and sentinels before it, I could not but think of his distressed family in agony lest his hiding place should be discovered.

Don Manuel was waiting for me, and we rode to the house of one of the ladies of the party, a young widow whom I had not seen before and who, in her riding dress, made a fine appearance. Her horse was ready, and when she



had kissed the old people good-by we carried her off. The women servants, with familiarity and affection, followed her to the door and continued farewell greetings and cautions to take good care of herself, which the lady answered as long as we were within hearing. We called at two or three other houses, and then all assembled at the place of rendezvous. The courtyard was full of horses with every variety of fanciful mountings. Although we were going only nine miles, and to a large Indian village, it was necessary to carry beds, bedding, and provisions. A train of servants large enough to carry stores for a small military expedition was sent ahead, and we all started. Outside the gate all the anxieties and perils which slumbered in the city were forgotten. Our road lay over an extensive plain, which, as the sun went down behind the volcanoes of Agua and Fuego, seemed a beautiful bowling green in which our party, preceded by a long file of Indians with loads on their backs, formed a picture. I was surprised to find that the ladies were not good horsewomen. They never rode for pleasure and, on account of the want of accommodation on the road, seldom traveled.

It was after dark when we reached the borders of a deep ravine separating the plain from Mixco, into which we descended. Rising on the other side, we emerged from the darkness of the ravine into an illuminated street, and, at two or three horses' lengths, into a plaza blazing with lights and crowded with people, nearly all of whom were Indians in holiday costume. In the center of the plaza was a fine fountain, and at the head of it a gigantic church. We rode up to the house that had been provided for the ladies, and, leaving them there, the gentlemen scattered to find lodgings for themselves. The door of every house was open, and the only question asked was whether there was room. Some of the young men did not give themselves the trouble of finding lodgings, as they were disposed to make a night of it, but Mr. Pavón and I secured a place and returned to the house occupied by the ladies. In one corner of the house was a *tienda*, or store, about ten feet square, partitioned off and shelved, which served as a place for their hats and shawls;

the rest of the house was one large room containing merely a long table and benches.

In a few moments the ladies were ready, and we all sallied out for a walk. All the streets and passages were brilliantly illuminated, and across some were arches decorated with evergreens and lighted, and at the corners under arbors of branches were altars adorned with flowers. The spirit of frolic seemed to take possession of our file leaders, who, as the humor prompted them, entered any house, and after a lively chat left it, contriving to come out just as the last of the party were going in. In one house they found a poncho rolled up very carefully, with the end of a guitar sticking out. The proprietor of the house only knew that it belonged to a young man from Guatemala, who had left it as an indication of his intention to pass the night there. One of the young men unrolled the poncho, and some loaves of bread fell out, which he distributed; with half a loaf in his mouth he struck up a waltz, which was followed by a quadrille. The good people of the house seemed pleased at this free use of their roof; shaking hands all around, with many expressions of good will on both sides, we left as unceremoniously as we had entered. We made the tour of all the principal streets, and as we returned to the plaza the procession was coming out of the church.

The village procession in honor of its patron saint is the great pride of the Indian and the touchstone of his religious character. Every Indian contributes his labor and money toward getting it up, and he is most honored who is allowed the most important part in it. This was a rich village, at which all the muleteers of Guatemala lived, and nowhere had I seen an Indian procession so imposing. The church stood on an elevation at the head of the plaza, its whole façade rich in ornaments illuminated by the light of torches, the large platform and the steps being thronged with women in white. A space was cleared in the middle before the great door, and with a loud chant the procession passed out of the doorway. First came the *alcalde* and his *alquaciles*, all Indians, with rods of office in one hand and lighted wax candles six or eight feet long in the other. They were followed by

a set of devils, which, while not as playful as the devils of Guatemala, were more hideous and probably better likenesses according to the notions of the Indians. Then there came, borne aloft by Indians, a large silver cross, richly chased and ornamented, which was followed by the curate, with a silken canopy held over his head on the ends of long poles borne by Indians. As the cross advanced all fell on their knees, and a stranger would have been thought guilty of an insult to their holy religion who omitted conforming to this ceremony. Next came figures of saints larger than life, borne on the shoulders of Indians, and then a figure of the Virgin, gorgeously dressed, her gown glittering with spangles. There followed, carrying lighted candles, a long procession of Indian women dressed in costume, with a thick red cord twisted in the hair to look like a turban. The procession passed through the illuminated streets, under the arches, and, stopping from time to time before the altars, made a tour of the village. In about an hour, with a loud chant, they ascended the steps of the church. The re-entry of the procession to the church was announced by a discharge of rockets, after which all gathered in the plaza for the exhibition of fireworks.

It was some time before these were ready, for those who had figured in the procession, particularly the devils, were also the principal managers of the fireworks. Our party was well known in Mixco and, though the steps of the church were crowded, one of the best places was immediately vacated for us. From their nearness to Guatemala, the people of Mixco knew all the principal families of the former place and were glad to see so distinguished a party at their fiesta. The familiar but respectful way in which we were everywhere treated, manifested a simplicity of manners and a kindliness of feeling between the rich and the poor which to me was one of the most interesting parts of the whole fête.

The exhibition began with the *Toro*. The man who played the part of the bull gave universal satisfaction; scattering and putting to flight the crowd in the plaza, he rushed up the steps of the church and, amid laughing and screaming,

went out. Other pieces, including flying pigeons, followed, and the whole was concluded with the grand national piece of the Castle of San Felipe, which was a representation of the repulse of an English fleet. A tall structure represented the castle, and a little brig perched on the end of a stick like a weathercock, the fleet. The brig fired a broadside and then, by a sudden jerk, turned on a pivot and fired another; long after, until she had riddled herself to pieces, the castle continued pouring out on all sides a magnanimous stream of fire.

When all was over we returned to the posada, or lodging house. A cloth was spread over the long table, and in a few minutes, under the direction of the ladies, it was covered with the picnic materials brought from Guatemala. The benches were drawn up to the table and as many as could find seats sat down. Before supper was over there was an irruption of young men from Guatemala, who with their glazed hats, ponchos, and swords presented a rather disorderly appearance; but they were mostly juveniles, brothers and cousins of the ladies. With their hats on, they seated themselves at the vacated tables. As soon as they had finished eating, they hurried off the plates and piled the tables away in a corner, one on the top of the other, with the candles on the top of all; the violins struck up, and gentlemen and ladies, lighting cigars and *cigarillos*, commenced dancing.

I am sorry to say that generally the ladies of Central America, not excepting Guatemala, smoke; married ladies smoke *puros*, or all tobacco, and unmarried ladies cigars, or tobacco wrapped in paper or straw. Every gentleman carries in his pocket a silver case, with a long string of cotton, steel, and flint, which takes up nearly as much space as a handkerchief. One of the offices of gallantry is to strike a light; by doing it well, he may help to kindle a flame in a lady's heart, but at all events, to do it bunglingly would be ill-bred. I will not express my sentiments on smoking as a custom for the sex. I have recollections of beauteous lips profaned; nevertheless, I have seen a lady show her prettiness and refinement, barely touching the straw to her lips,

as if kissing it gently. When a gentleman asks a lady for a light, she always removes the cigar from her lips. Happily, the dangerous proximity which sometimes occurs in a similar circumstance between gentlemen in the street is not in vogue.

The dancing continued till two o'clock, and the breaking up was like the separation of a gay family party. The young men dispersed to sleep or to finish the night with merriment elsewhere, and Don Manuel and I retired to the house he had secured for us.

We were in our hammocks, talking over the affairs of the night, when we heard a noise in the street, a loud tramping past the door, and a clash of swords. Presently Mr. Pavón's servant knocked for admission and told us that a few doors off a man had been killed by a sword cut across the head. Instead of going out to gratify an idle curiosity, like prudent men we secured the door. The tramping passed up the street, and presently we heard reports of firearms. The whole place seemed to be in an uproar. We had hardly lain down again before there was another knock at the door. Our host, a respectable old man, and his wife slept in a back room, and, afraid of rioters, they went into consultation about opening the door. The man was unwilling to do so, but his wife, with a mother's apprehensions, said that she was afraid some accident might have happened to Chico. As the knocking continued, we heard Rafael, a known companion of their son, cry out that Chico was wounded. The old man rose for a light, and, apprehending the worst, the mother and a young sister burst into tears. But the old man sternly checked them; he said that he had always cautioned Chico against going out at night and that he deserved to be punished. The sister ran and opened the door, and two young men entered. We could see the glitter of their swords, and that one was supporting the other, and just as the old man procured a light, the wounded man fell on the ground. His face was ghastly pale and spotted with blood, his hat cut through the crown and rim as smoothly as if done with a razor, and his right hand and arm were wound in a pocket handkerchief, which was stained with blood. The

old man looked at him with the sternness of a Roman, and told him that he knew this would be the consequence of his running out at night. The mother and sister cried, and the young man, with a feeble voice, begged his father to spare him. His companion carried him into the back room, but before they could lay him on the bed he fell again and fainted. The father was alarmed and, when the boy recovered, asked him whether he wished to confess. Chico, with a faint voice, answered, "As you please." The old man told his daughter to go for the padre, but the uproar was so great in the street that she was afraid to venture out.

In the meantime we examined Chico's head, which, notwithstanding the cut through his hat, was barely touched; he himself said that he had received the blow on his hand and that it was cut off. There was no physician nearer than Guatemala, and not a person who was able to do anything for him. I had had some practice in medicine, but none in surgery; I knew, however, that it was at all events proper to wash and cleanse the wound, and with the assistance of Don Manuel's servant, a young Englishman whom Don Manuel had brought from the United States, I laid him on a bed. This servant had had some experience in the brawls of the country, having killed a young man in a quarrel growing out of a love affair, and having been confined to the house for seven months by wounds received in the same encounter. With his assistance I proceeded to unwind the bloody handkerchief, but I found that my courage began to fail me, and when, with the last coil, a dead hand fell in mine, a shudder and a deep groan ran through the spectators and I almost let the hand drop. It was cut off through the back above the knuckles, and the four fingers hung merely by the fleshy part of the thumb. The skin was drawn back, and showed on each side four bones protruding like the teeth of a skeleton. I joined them together, and as he drew up his arm they jarred like the grating of teeth. I saw that the case was beyond my art. Possibly the hand could have been restored by sewing the skin together, but I believed that the only thing to be done was to cut it off entirely, and this I was not willing to do. Unable to give any

further assistance, I wound it up again in the handkerchief. The young man had a mild and pleasing countenance, and was as thankful for my ineffectual attempt as if I had really served him; he told me not to give myself any more trouble, but to return to bed. His mother and sister, with stifled sobs, hung over his head; his father retained the sternness of his manner, but it was easy to see that his heart was bleeding. To me, a stranger, it was horrible to see a fine young man mutilated for life in a street brawl.

As Chico, himself, told the story, he had been walking with some of his friends when he met one of the Espinozas from Guatemala, who was also with a party of friends. Espinoza, who was known as a bully, approached them with an expression in Spanish about equivalent to the English one, "I'll give it to you." Chico answered, "No you won't," and immediately they drew their swords. Chico, in attempting to ward off a stroke, received it on the edge of his raised right hand. In passing through all the bones, its force was so much broken that it only cut the crown and rim of his hat. The loss of his hand had no doubt saved his life, for, if the whole force of the stroke had fallen on his head, it must have killed him. But the unfortunate young man, instead of being thankful for his escape, swore vengeance against Espinoza; and Espinoza, as I afterward learned, swore that the next time Chico should not escape with the loss of his hand. In all probability, when they do meet again one of them will be killed.

All this time the uproar continued, shifting its location, with occasional reports of firearms; an aunt was wringing her hands because her son was out, and we had reason to fear a tragical night. We went to bed, but for a long time the noise in the street, the groans of poor Chico, and the sobbing of his mother and sister kept us from sleeping.

We did not wake till nearly ten o'clock. It was Sunday and the morning was bright and beautiful. The arches and flowers still adorned the streets, and the Indians, in their clean clothes, were going to Sunday mass. None except the immediate parties knew or cared about the events of the night. Crossing the plaza, we met a tall, dashing fellow on horse-

back, with a long sword by his side, who bowed to Mr. Pavón and rode on past the house of Chico. This was Espinoza. No one attempted to molest him, and no notice whatever was taken of the circumstance by the authorities.

The door of the church was so crowded that we could not enter and, passing through the curate's house, we stood in a doorway on one side of the altar. The curate, in his richest vestments, with young Indian assistants in sacerdotal dresses, their long black hair and sluggish features contrasting strangely with their garb and occupations, was officiating at the altar. On the front steps, with their black *mantones* drawn over their heads and their eyes bent on the ground, were the dancers of our party the preceding night. Kneeling along the whole floor of the immense church was a dense mass of Indian women, with red headdresses, and, leaning against the pillars and standing up in the background, were Indians wrapped in black *chamarras*, or ponchos.

We waited till mass was over and then accompanied the ladies to the house and breakfasted. Sunday though it was, the occupations for the day were a cockfight in the morning and a bullfight in the afternoon. Our party was increased by the arrival of a distinguished family from Guatemala, and we all set out for the cockfight. It was held in the yard of an unoccupied house, which was already crowded. I noticed, to the honor of the Indians and the shame of the better classes, that they were all mestizos, or white men, and, always excepting Carrera's soldiers, I never saw a worse looking or more assassin-like set of men. All along the walls of the yard were cocks tied by one leg, and men were running about with other cocks under their arms, putting them on the ground to compare size and weight, regulating bets, and trying to cheat each other. At length a match was made; the ladies of our party had seats in the corridor of the house, and a space was cleared before them. The gaffs were murderous instruments, more than two inches long; they were thick and sharp as needles. The birds were hardly on the ground before the feathers of the neck were ruffled and they flew at each other. In less time than had been taken to gaff them, one was lying on the ground dead, with its tongue



hanging out and the blood running from its mouth. The eagerness and vehemence, noise and uproar, wrangling, betting, swearing, and scuffling of the crowd, exhibited a dark picture of human nature and a sanguinary people. I owe it to the ladies to say that in the city they never are present at such scenes. Here they went for no other reason that I could see than because they were away from home, and it was part of the fête. We must make allowances for an education and a state of society every way different from our own. They were not wanting in sensibility or refinement; though they did not turn away with disgust, they seemed to take no interest in the fight and when it was over they were not disposed to tarry for a second.

Leaving the disgusting scene, we walked around the suburbs, where at one point we beheld a noble view of the plain and city of Guatemala, with the surrounding mountains, and we could not help but wonder how, amid objects so grand and glorious, men can grow up with tastes so groveling. Crossing the plaza, we heard music in a large house belonging to a rich muleteer; and entering, we found a young harpist, and two mendicant friars with shaved crowns, dressed in white, with long white mantles and hoods, of an order newly revived in Guatemala. They were all drinking *aguardiente*. Mantas and hats were thrown off and tables and seats placed against the wall; in a few moments my friends were waltzing. Two or three cotillons followed before we returned to the posada, where, after fruit of various kinds had been served, we all took seats on the back piazza. A horse happened to be loose in the yard, and a young man, putting his hands on its hind quarters, jumped on its back; the rest of the young men followed suit. Then one of them lifted the horse up by its forelegs and, when he dropped them, another took them up, to be followed, in turn, by all the others, very much to the astonishment of the poor animal. Then there followed a game in which the young men stood on the piazza and jumped over each other's heads; then one man leaned down with his hands resting on the piazza while another man mounted on his back, the first man trying to shake the second man off without letting

go his hands. Other feats followed, all impromptu, and each more absurd than the one before it. The last game was a bullfight, in which two young men mounted on the backs of two others as matadors, and a third man, with his head between his shoulders, ran at them like a bull. Though these amusements were not very elegant, all were so intimate with each other, and there was such perfect abandonment, that the whole went off with shouts of laughter.

The young men now brought out the ladies' mantas and again we sallied forth for a walk. But, when we reached the plaza, the young men changed their minds and, seating the ladies to whom I attached myself in the shade, they commenced to play prisoner's base. All who passed stopped, and the villagers seemed delighted with the gaiety of our party. The players tumbled each other in the dust, to the great amusement of the lookers-on, until we saw trays coming across the plaza, which was a sign of dinner. After dinner, thinking that I had seen enough for one Sunday, I determined to forego the bullfight. In company with Don Manuel and another prominent member of the Assembly and his family, I set out on my return to the city. Their mode of traveling was primitive. All were on horseback: the Assemblyman with a little son behind him, his daughter alone, his wife on a pillion with a servant to support her, a servant-maid with a child in her arms, and a servant on the top of the luggage. It was a beautiful afternoon, and the plain of Guatemala, with its green grass and dark mountains, was a lovely scene. As we entered the city we encountered another religious procession, with priests and monks all bearing lighted candles and preceded by men throwing rockets. We avoided the plaza on account of the soldiers and, in a few minutes, I was in my house, alone.

## Chapter XIII

*Excursion to Antigua and the Pacific Ocean. San Lucas. Mountain scenery. El Río Pensativo. Antigua. Account of its destruction. An octogenarian. The cathedral. San Juan Obispo. Santa María. Volcán de Agua. Ascent of the mountain. The crater. A lofty meeting place. The descent. Return to Antigua. Cultivation of cochineal. Classic ground. Ciudad Vieja. Its foundation. Visit from Indians. Departure from Ciudad Vieja. First sight of the Pacific. Alotenango. Volcán de Fuego. Escuinila. Sunset scene. Masagua. Port of Iztapa. Arrival at the Pacific.*

ON Tuesday, the seventeenth of December, I set out on an excursion to La Antigua Guatemala and the Pacific Ocean. I was accompanied by a young man who lived opposite me and who wished to ascend the Volcán de Agua. I had discharged Augustin and with great difficulty procured a man who knew the route. Rumaldo had but one fault: he was married! Like some other married men, he had a fancy for roving, but his wife set her face against this propensity. She said that I was going to *el mar*, the sea, and might carry him off and she would never see him again; <sup>1</sup> the affectionate woman wept at the bare idea, but upon my paying the money into her hands before going, she consented. My only luggage was a hammock and pair of sheets, which Rumaldo carried on his mule, and each of us had a pair of alforjas. At the gate we met Don José Vidaurre, whom I had first seen in the president's chair of the Constituent Assembly, who was setting out to visit his hacienda at Antigua. Though it was only five or six hours' distant, Señor Vidaurre, being a

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1. Rumaldo, Stephens tells us, was killed at the battle of Comitán, May 15th, 1841.

very heavy man, had two led horses, one of which he insisted on my mounting. When I expressed my admiration of the animal, he told me, in the usual phrase of Spanish courtesy, that the horse was mine. It was done in the same spirit in which a Frenchman, who, entertained hospitably in a country house in England, would offer himself to seven of the daughters of his host, merely as a compliment. My worthy friend would have been very much astonished if I had accepted his offer.

The road to Mixco I have already described. In the village I stopped to see Chico. His hand had been cut off and he was doing well. Leaving the village, we ascended a steep mountain, from the top of which we had a fine view of the village at its foot, the plain and city of Guatemala, and the Lake of Amatitlán, enclosed by a belt of mountains. Descending by a wild and rugged road, we reached a plain and saw on the left the village of San Lucas, and on the right, at some distance, San Mateo. We then entered a piece of woodland and crossed another mountain, descending its precipitous side, with a magnificent ravine on our right, to a beautiful stream. At this place mountains rose all around us; but the banks of the stream were covered with delicate flowers, and parrots with gay plumage were perched on the trees and flying over our heads, making, in the midst of gigantic scenery, a fairy spot. The stream passed between two ranges of mountains so close together that there was barely room for a single horsepath by its side. As we continued, the mountains turned to the left, and on the other side of the stream were a few openings cultivated with cochineal into the very hollow of the mountainside. Again the road turned and then ran straight, making a vista of more than a mile between the mountains. At the end of the road in a delightful valley stood Antigua, shut in by mountains and hills that always retain their verdure, watered by two rivers that supply numerous fountains, with a climate in which heat or cold never predominates. Yet this city, surrounded by more natural beauty than any location I ever saw, has perhaps undergone more calamities than any city that was ever built. We passed the gate and rode through

the suburbs in the opening of the valley, on one side of which was a new house, that reminded me of an Italian villa, with a large cochineal plantation extending to the base of the mountain. We crossed a stream bearing the poetical name of El Río Pensativo; on the other side was a fine fountain, and at the corner of the street was the ruined church of Santo Domingo, a monument of the dreadful earthquakes which had prostrated the old capital and driven the inhabitants from their home.

On each side were the ruins of churches, convents, and private residences, large and costly; some were lying in masses, some with fronts were still standing. Richly ornamented with stucco, they were cracked and yawning and roofless, without doors or windows, and with trees growing inside above the walls. Many of the houses have been repaired, and the city, now repeopled, presents a strange appearance of both ruin and recovery. The inhabitants, like the dwellers over the buried Herculaneum, seemed to entertain no fears of renewed disaster. I rode up to the house of Don Miguel Manrique, which had been occupied by his family at the time of the destruction of the city, and, after receiving a kind welcome, in company with Señor Vidaurre, I walked to the plaza.

The print (figure 31) will give an idea, which I cannot, of the beauty of this scene. The great volcanoes of Agua and Fuego look down upon the plaza in the center of which is a noble stone fountain. Facing the square is the palace of the captain-general, which displays on its front the armorial bearings granted by Emperor Charles the Fifth to the loyal and noble city, and is surmounted by the Apostle St. James on horseback, armed and brandishing a sword. And there, also, is the majestic but roofless and ruined cathedral, three hundred feet long, one hundred and twenty broad, and nearly seventy high, lighted by fifty windows. These and other buildings show at this day that Antigua was once one of the finest cities of the New World, that she deserved the proud name which Alvarado gave it, The City of St. James of Gentlemen.<sup>2</sup>

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2. The complete name is "The Very Noble and Very Loyal City of St. James of the Knights of Guatemala."

This was the second capital of Guatemala, founded in 1543 after the destruction of the first by a water volcano. Its history is one of uninterrupted disasters. "In 1558 an epidemic disorder, attended with a violent bleeding at the nose, swept away great numbers of people; nor could the faculty devise any method to arrest the progress of the distemper. Many severe shocks of earthquake were felt at different periods; the one in 1565 seriously damaged many of the principal buildings; those of 1575, 76, and 77 were not less ruinous. On the 27th of December, 1581, the population was again alarmed by the volcano, which began to emit fire; and so great was the quantity of ashes thrown out and spread in the air, that the sun was entirely obscured, and artificial light was necessary in the city at midday.

"The years 1585 and 6 were dreadful in the extreme. On January 16th of the former, earthquakes were felt, and they continued through that and the following year so frequently that not an interval of eight days elapsed during the whole period without a shock more or less violent. Fire issued incessantly, for months together, from the mountain, and greatly increased the general consternation. The greatest damage of this series took place on the 23d of December, 1586, when the major part of the city again became a heap of ruins, burying under them many of the unfortunate inhabitants; the earth shook with such violence that the tops of the high ridges were torn off and deep chasms formed in various parts of the level ground.

"In 1601 a pestilential distemper carried off great numbers. It raged with so much malignity that three days generally terminated the existence of such as were affected by it.

"On the 18th of February, 1651, about one o'clock in the afternoon, a most extraordinary subterranean noise was heard, and was immediately followed by three violent shocks, at very short intervals from each other, which threw down many buildings and damaged others; the tiles from the roofs of the houses were dispersed in all directions, like light straws by a gust of wind; the bells of the churches were rung by the vibrations; masses of rock were detached from the mountains; and even the wild beasts were so ter-

rified that, losing their natural instinct, they quitted their retreats and sought shelter among the habitations of men.

"The year 1686 brought with it another dreadful epidemic, which in three months swept away a tenth part of the inhabitants . . . . From the capital the pestilence spread to the neighbouring villages and thence to the more remote ones, causing dreadful havoc, particularly among the most robust of the inhabitants.

"The year 1717 was memorable; on the night of August 27th the mountain began to emit flames, attended by a continued subterranean rumbling noise. On the night of the 28th the eruption increased to great violence and very much alarmed the inhabitants. The images of saints were carried in procession, public prayers were put up day after day; but the terrifying eruption still continued and was followed by frequent shocks, at intervals, for more than four months. At last, on the night of September 29th, the fate of Guatemala appeared to be decided, and inevitable destruction seemed to be at hand. Great was the ruin among the public edifices; many of the houses were thrown down, and nearly all that remained weré dreadfully injured; but the greatest devastation was seen in the churches.

"The year 1773 was the most melancholy epoch in the annals of this metropolis; it was then destroyed, and, as the capital, rose no more from its ruins. . . . About four o'clock, on the afternoon of July 29, a tremendous vibration was felt, and shortly after began the dreadful convulsion that decided the fate of the unfortunate city. . . . On the 7th of September there was another, which threw down most of the buildings that were damaged on the 29th of July; and on the 13th of December, one still more violent terminated the work of destruction. . . .

"The people had not well recovered from the consternation inflicted by the events of the fatal 29th of July, when a meeting was convoked for the purpose of collecting the sense of the inhabitants on the subject of the removal. . . . In this meeting it was determined all the public authorities should remove provisionally to the village of La Hermita until the valleys of Jalapa and Las Vacas could be surveyed

and until the king's pleasure could be ascertained on the subject. . . .

"On the 6th of September the governor and all the tribunals withdrew to La Hermita; the surveys of the last-mentioned places being completed, the inhabitants were again convoked to decide upon the transfer. This congress was held in the temporary capital, and it lasted from the 12th to the 16th of January, 1774: the report of the commissioners was read, and, by a plurality of votes, it was resolved to make a formal translation of the city of Guatemala to the Valley of Las Vacas. The king gave his assent to this resolution on the 21st of July, 1775; and, by a decree of the 21st of September following, he approved most of the plans that were proposed for carrying the determination into effect, granting very liberally the whole revenue arising from the customs, for the space of ten years, toward the charges of building, &c. By virtue of this decree, the ayuntamiento was in due form established in the new situation on the 1st of January, 1776; and on the 29th of July, 1777, a proclamation was issued in Old Guatemala, commanding the population to remove to the new city within one year and totally abandon the remains of the old one."

Such is the account given by the historian<sup>3</sup> of Guatemala concerning the destruction of this city. I, myself, saw on the spot Padre Antonio Croquer, an octogenarian (who died on August 6, 1841) and the oldest canónigo in Guatemala, who was living in the city during the earthquake which completed its destruction. He was still vigorous in frame and intellect, writing his name with a free hand in my memorandum book, and he had vivid recollections of the splendor of the city in his boyhood, when, as he said, carriages rolled through it as in the streets of Madrid. On the fatal day he was in the Church of San Francisco with two padres, one of whom, at the moment of the shock, took him by the hand and hurried him into the patio; the other was buried under the ruins of the church. He remembered that the tiles

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3. Quoted from pages 148-157 of the English translation of Juarros history of Guatemala (see note 4, p. 76).



flew from the roofs of the houses in every direction; the clouds of dust were suffocating, and the people ran to the fountains to quench their thirst. The fountains were broken, and one man snatched off his hat to dip for water. The archbishop slept that night in his carriage in the plaza. Father Antonio described to me the ruins of individual buildings, the dead who were dug from under them, and the confusion and terror of the inhabitants; though his recollections were only those of a boy, he had material enough for hours of conversation.

In company with the cura we visited the interior of the cathedral. The gigantic walls were standing but roofless. The interior was occupied as a burying ground, and the graves were shaded by a forest of dahlias and trees, seventy or eighty feet high, which rose above the walls. The grand altar stood under a cupola supported by sixteen columns faced with tortoise shell and adorned with bronze medallions of exquisite workmanship. On the cornice there had once been placed statues of the Virgin and the twelve apostles in ivory, but all these were now gone. Even more interesting than the recollections of its ancient splendor or its mournful ruins, was the empty vault where once reposed the ashes of Alvarado the Conqueror.

Toward evening my young companion Rumaldo rejoined me, and we set out for Santa María, an Indian village at two leagues' distance situated on the side of the Volcán de Agua, which we intended to ascend the next day to the summit. As we entered the valley, the scene was so beautiful I did not wonder that even earthquakes could not make it desolate. At the distance of a league we reached the village of San Juan del Obispo. The church and convent had been conspicuous from below and their site commanded a magnificent view of the valley and city of Antigua.

At dark we reached the village of Santa María, perched at a height of two thousand feet above Antigua and seven thousand feet above the level of the Pacific. The church stands in a noble court with several gates, and before it is a gigantic white cross. We rode up to the convent, which is

under the care of the cura of San Juan del Obispo, but it was unoccupied, and there was no one to receive us except a talkative little old man, who had only arrived that morning. Very soon there was an irruption of Indians, who, with the alcalde and his alguaciles, came to offer their services as guides up the mountain. They were the first Indians I had met who did not speak Spanish, and their eagerness and clamor reminded me of my old friends the Arabs. They represented the ascent as very steep, with dangerous precipices; they said the path was extremely difficult to find, and that it would be necessary for each of us to have sixteen men with ropes to haul us up and to pay twelve dollars for each man. They seemed a little astonished when I told them that we wanted only two men each and would give them half a dollar apiece, but they fell immediately to eight men for each at a dollar apiece. After a noisy wrangling, we picked out six from forty, and they all retired.

In a few minutes we heard a violin out of doors, which we thought was in honor of us; but it was for the little old man, who was a *titiritero*, or puppet-player, who intended to give an exhibition that night. The music entered the room, and a man stationed himself at the door to admit visitors. The price of admission was three cents, and there were frequent wranglings to have one cent taken off or two admitted for three cents. The high price preventing the entrance of common people, the company was very select, and all sat on the floor. The receipts, as I learned from the doorkeeper, were upward of five shillings. Rumaldo, who was a skillful amateur, led the orchestra—that is, the other fiddler. The puppet-player was in an adjoining room, and when the door opened, a black *chamarra* was disclosed hanging as a curtain, the rising of which discovered the puppet-player sitting at a table with his little figures before him. The sports of the puppets were carried on with ventriloquial conversations, in the midst of which I fell asleep.

We did not get off till seven o'clock the next morning. The day was very unpromising, and the whole mountain was covered with clouds. At this point the side of the volcano

was still cultivated. In half an hour the road became so steep and slippery that we dismounted and continued the ascent on foot; each of us was equipped with a strong staff. The Indians went on before, carrying water and provisions. At a quarter before eight we entered the middle region, which is covered with a broad belt of thick forest; the path was steep and muddy, and every three or four minutes we were obliged to stop and rest. At a quarter before nine we reached a clearing in which stood a large wooden cross. This was the first resting place, and we sat down at the foot of the cross and lunched. A drizzling rain had commenced, but, in the hope of a change, at half past nine we resumed our ascent. The path became steeper and muddier, the trees were so thickly crowded together, their branches and trunks covered with green excrescences, that the sun never found its way through them. The path was made and kept open by Indians, who go up in the wintertime to procure snow and ice for Guatemala. The labor of toiling up this muddy acclivity was excessive, and very soon my young companion became so fatigued that he was unable to continue without help. One of the ropes, with which the Indians were provided, was tied around his waist, and two Indians went ahead of him with the other end of the rope over their shoulders.

At half past ten we were above the region of forest and came out upon the open side of the volcano. There was still a scattering of trees, long grass, and a great variety of curious plants and flowers, furnishing rich materials for the botanist. Among them was a plant with a red flower, called the *mano del mico*, or hand-plant,<sup>4</sup> but more like a monkey's paw, growing to a height of thirty or forty feet, the inside a light vermilion color, and the outside vermilion with stripes of yellow. My companion, tired with the toil of ascending even with the aid of the rope, at length mounted an Indian's shoulders. I was obliged to stop every two or three minutes, and my rests were about equal to the actual time of walking. The great difficulty was on account of the wet and mud, which, in ascending, made us lose part of every step. It was so slippery that, even with the staff and the assistance of

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4. The Spanish phrase means literally "monkey's hand."

branches of trees and bushes, it was difficult to keep from falling. About half an hour before reaching the top, and perhaps one thousand or fifteen hundred feet from it, the trees became scarce and seemed blazed by lightning or withered by cold. The clouds gathered thicker than before, and I lost all hope of a clear day.

At half an hour before twelve we reached the top and descended into the crater. A whirlwind of cloud and vapor was sweeping around it. We were in a perspiration, our clothes were saturated with rain and mud, and in a few moments the cold penetrated our very bones. We attempted to build a fire, but the sticks and leaves were wet and would not burn. For a few moments we raised a feeble flame and all crouched around it, but a sprinkling of rain came down, just enough to put it out. We could see nothing, and the shivering Indians begged me to return. On rocks near us were inscriptions, one of which bore the date of 1548, and on a cut stone were the words:

ALEXANDRO LDVERT  
DE SAN PETERSBURGO;  
EDVARDO LEGH PAGE,  
DE INGLATERRA;  
JOSE CROSKEY,  
DE FYLADELFFE,  
BIBYMOS AQUÍ UNAS BOTEAS  
DE CHAMPANA, EL DÍA 26  
DE AGOSTO DE 1834.

It seemed strange that three men from such distant and different parts of the world—St. Petersburg, England, and *Philadelphia*—had met to drink champagne on the top of this volcano. While I was blowing my fingers and copying the inscription, the vapor cleared away a little and gave me a view of the interior of the crater. It was a large oval basin, the area level and covered with grass. The sides were sloping and about one hundred or one hundred and fifty feet high; all around were masses of rock piled up in magnificent confusion and rising to inaccessible peaks. There is no tradition of this mountain having ever emitted fire, and there is

no calcined matter or other mark of volcanic eruption anywhere in its vicinity. The historical account is that in 1541 an immense torrent, not of fire but of water and stones, was vomited from the crater, by which the old city was destroyed. Father Remesal<sup>5</sup> relates that on this occasion the crown of the mountain fell down. The height of this detached part was one league, and the distance from the remaining summit to the plain was three leagues, which he affirms he measured in 1615. The area, by my measurement, is eighty-three paces long and sixty wide. According to Torquemada<sup>6</sup> (and such is the tradition according to Padre Alcántara of Ciudad Vieja), this immense basin, probably the crater of an extinct volcano with sides much higher than they are now, became filled with water by accumulations of snow and rain. There never was any eruption of water, but one of the sides gave way, and the immense body of fluid rushed out with horrific force, carrying with it rocks and trees, inundating and destroying all that opposed its progress. The immense *barranca*, or ravine, by which it descended was still fearfully visible on the side of the mountain. The height of this mountain has been ascertained by barometrical observation to be fourteen thousand four hundred and fifty feet above the level of the sea. The edge of the crater commands a beautiful view of the old city of Guatemala, thirty-two surrounding villages, and the Pacific Ocean—at least so I am told, but I saw nothing of it. Nevertheless, I did not regret my labor and, though drenched with rain and plastered with mud, I promised myself that in the month of February, when the weather is fine, I would ascend again, prepared for the purpose, and would pass two or three days in the crater.

At one o'clock we began our descent. It was rapid and sometimes dangerous from the excessive steepness and slipperiness, and the chance of pitching head foremost against

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5. Fray Antonio de Remesal, author of *Historia General de las Indias Occidentales y particular de la Gobernación de Chiapa y Guatemala*. (Modern Edition, Guatemala, 1932.)

6. Juan Torquemada, author of *Monarquía indiana*, Madrid, 1613.

the trunk of a tree. At two o'clock we reached the cross. I mention as a hint for others, that, because of the pressure of heavy waterproof boots upon the *doigts du pied*, I was obliged to stop frequently; and, after changing the pressure by descending sidewise and backward, catching at the branches of trees, I was obliged to pull off my boots and go down barefooted, ankle deep in mud. My feet were severely bruised by the stones, and I could hardly walk at all, when I met one of the Indians pulling my horse up the mountain to meet me. At four o'clock we reached Santa María; at five, Antigua; and at a quarter past, I was in bed.

The next morning I was still asleep when Señor Vidaurre rode into the courtyard to escort me on my journey, but, leaving Rumaldo to follow, I was soon mounted. Emerging from the city, we entered the open plain, shut in by mountains cultivated to their base with cochineal. At about a mile's distance we turned in to the hacienda of Señor Vidaurre. In the yard were four oxen grinding sugar cane, and behind was his nopal, or cochineal plantation, one of the largest in Antigua. The plant is a species of cactus, set out in rows like Indian corn, which, at that time, was about four feet high. On every leaf was pinned with a thorn a piece of cane, in the hollow of which were thirty or forty insects. These insects cannot move, but they do breed; the young crawl out and fasten upon the leaf and, when they have once fixed, they never move; a light film gathers over them and, as they feed, the leaves become mildewed and white. At the end of the dry season some of the leaves are cut off and hung up in a storehouse for seed; the insects are brushed off from the rest and dried, and are then sent abroad to minister to the luxuries and elegances of civilized life, and to enliven with their bright colors the salons of London, Paris, and St. Louis in Missouri. The crop is valuable but uncertain, as an early rain may destroy it, and sometimes all the workmen of a hacienda are taken away for soldiers at the moment when they are most needed for its culture. The situation was ravishingly beautiful at the base and under the shade of the Volcán de Agua, and the view was bounded on all sides by

mountains of perpetual green; the morning air was soft and balmy, but pure and refreshing. With good government and laws, and one's friends around, I never saw a more beautiful spot on which man could desire to pass his allotted time on earth.

Resuming our ride, we came out upon a rich plain between the bases of the two great volcanoes; it was covered with grass and on it cattle and horses were pasturing. On the left, at a distance, on the side of the Volcán de Agua, we saw the Church of Ciudad Vieja, the first capital of Guatemala, which was founded by Alvarado the Conqueror. I was now on classic ground. The fame of Cortes and his exploits in Mexico had spread among the Indian tribes to the south, and the Kakchiquel kings sent an embassy offering to acknowledge themselves vassals of Spain. Cortes received the ambassadors with distinction, and sent Pedro de Alvarado, an officer distinguished in the conquest of New Spain, to receive the submission of the native kings and take possession of Guatemala. On the thirteenth of November, 1523, Alvarado left the city of Mexico with three hundred Spaniards, and a large body of Tlascaltecas, Cholultecas, Chimapas, and other auxiliary Mexican Indians. He fought his way through the populous provinces of Soconusco and Tonalá and, on the fourteenth of May, by a decisive victory over the Quiché Indians, he arrived at the capital of the Kakchiquel kingdom, now known as the village of Tecpán Guatemala. After remaining a few days to recover from their fatigues, the conquering army continued their route by the villages on the coast, overcoming all that disputed their progress. On the 24th of July, 1524, they arrived at a place called by the Indians Almolonga, meaning, in their language, a spring of water (or the mountain from which water flows), situated at the base of the Volcán de Agua. The situation, says Remesal, pleased them so much by its fine climate, by the beauty of the meadows delightfully watered by running streams, and particularly by its position lying as it did between two lofty mountains, from one of which descended runs of water in every direction, and from the summit of the other issued volumes of smoke and fire, that they deter-

mined to build a city which should be the capital of Guatemala.

On the twenty-fifth of July (the festival of St. James, the patron of Spain), the soldiers, with martial music, and with splendid armor, waving plumes, and horses superbly caparisoned in trappings glittering with jewels and plates of gold, proceeded to the humble church which had been constructed for that purpose, where Juan Godínez, the chaplain to the army, said mass. The whole body invoked the protection of the apostle, and called by his name the city they had founded. On the same day Alvarado appointed *alcaldes*, *regidores*, and the chief *alguacil*. The appearance of the country harmonized with the romantic scenes of which it had been the theatre; as I rode over the plain I could almost imagine the sides of the mountains covered with Indians, and Alvarado and his small band of daring Spaniards, soldiers and priests, with martial pride and religious humility, unfurling the banners of Spain and setting up the standard of the cross.

As we approached the town its situation appeared more beautiful. But very early in its history dreadful calamities befell it. "In 1532 the vicinity of the city was ravaged, and the inhabitants thrown into consternation by a lion of uncommon magnitude and ferocity, that descended from the forests on the mountain called the Volcán de Agua, and committed great devastation among the herds of cattle. A reward of twenty-five gold dollars, or one hundred bushels of wheat, was offered by the town council to any person that could kill it; but the animal escaped, even from a general hunting party of the whole city with Alvarado at the head of it. After five or six months' continual depredations, he was killed on the thirtieth of July by a herdsman, who received the promised reward. The next great disaster was a fire that happened in February, 1536, and caused great injury; as the houses were at the time nearly all thatched with straw, a large portion of them was destroyed before it could be extinguished. The accident originated in a blacksmith's shop; to prevent similar misfortunes in the future, the council prohibited the employment of forges within the city.



"The most dreadful calamity that had as yet afflicted this unfortunate place occurred on the morning of September 11, 1541. It had rained incessantly, and with great violence, on the three preceding days, particularly on the night of the tenth, when the water descended more like the torrent of a cataract than rain; the fury of the wind, the incessant appalling lightning, and the dreadful thunder, were indescribable. . . . At two o'clock on the morning of the eleventh, the vibrations of the earth were so violent that the people were unable to stand. The shocks were accompanied by a terrible subterranean noise, which spread universal dismay; and, shortly afterward, an immense torrent of water rushed down from the summit of the mountain, forcing away with it enormous fragments of rocks and large trees, which, descending upon the ill-fated town, overwhelmed and destroyed almost all the houses, and buried a great number of the inhabitants under the ruins; among the many, Doña Beatriz de la Cueva, the widow of Pedro de Alvarado, lost her life."<sup>7</sup>

All the way down the side of the volcano we saw the seams and gullies made by the torrents of water which had inundated the city. Again we crossed the beautiful stream of El Río Pensativo, and rode up to the convent. It stands adjoining the gigantic and venerable church of the Virgin. In front was a high stone wall. A large gate opened into a courtyard, at the extremity and along the side of which were the spacious corridors of the convent, and on the left the gigantic wall of the church, with a door of entry from one end of the corridor. The patio was sunk about four feet below the level of the corridor, and divided into parterres, with beds of flowers; in the center was a large white circular fountain, with goldfish swimming in it, and rising out of it, above a *jet d'eau*, an angel with a trumpet and flag.

Señor Vidaurre had advised Padre Alcántara of my intended visit and he was waiting to receive us. He was about thirty-three, intelligent, educated, and energetic, with a passion for flowers, as was shown by the beautiful arrangements

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7. Quoted from pages 146-148 of the English translation of Juarros history of Guatemala (see note 4, p. 76).

of the courtyard. He had been banished by Morazán and had only returned to his curacy about a year before. On a visit to him was his friend and neighbor Don Pepe Asteguieta, proprietor of a cochineal hacienda and a man of the same stamp and character. They were among the few whom I met who took any interest in the romantic events connected with the early history of the country.

After a brief rest in the convent, with a feeling more highly wrought than any that had been awakened in me except by the ruins of Copán, we visited a tree standing before the church and extending wide its branches, under whose shade, tradition says, Alvarado and his soldiers first encamped. We visited also the fountain of Almolonga, or, in the Indian language, the mountain from which water flows, which first induced Alvarado to select this spot as the site for the capital. The fountain is a large natural basin of clear and beautiful water, shaded by trees, under which thirty or forty Indian women were washing. The ruined cathedral, on the spot where Juan Godínez first said mass, next claimed our attention. The walls of the cathedral were standing, and in one corner was a chamber filled with the skulls and bones of those destroyed by the inundation from the volcano. After breakfast we visited the church, which was very large and more than two hundred years old; its altar was rich in ornaments of gold and silver, among which was a magnificent crown of gold studded with diamonds and emeralds, which had been presented by one of the Philips to the Virgin, to whom the church was consecrated.

Returning to the house, I found that Padre Alcántara had prepared for me a visit from a deputation of Indians, which consisted of the principal chiefs and women, descendants of caciques of the Mexican auxiliaries of Alvarado, who called themselves, like the Spaniards, *conquistadores*, or conquerors. They entered wearing the same costumes which their ancestors had worn in the time of Cortes and bearing on a salver covered with velvet a precious book bound in red velvet, with silver corners and clasp, which contained the written evidence of their rank and rights. Dated 1639, it was written on parchment and contained the order of Philip the Fourth, acknowledging them as conquerors, and

exempting them, as such, from the tribute paid by the native Indians. This exemption continued until the revolution of 1825, and even yet they call themselves descendants of the conquerors and the head of the Indian aristocracy. The interest which I felt in these memorials of the conquerors was increased in no small degree by the beauty and comfort of the convent and by Padre Alcántara's kindness. In the afternoon we walked down to the bridge across the Río Pensativo. The plain on which the Spanish soldiers had glittered in armor was shaded by the high volcanoes, and the spirit of romance rested upon it.

The day which I passed at the "old city" is one of those upon which I look back with pleasure. Señor Vidaurre and Don Pepe remained with us all day. Afterward, when Padre Alcántara had again been obliged to flee from the convent at the approach of an invading army, and after we had all passed through the crash of the revolution, on leaving Guatemala to return home, I diverged from my road to pay them a visit; they were the last friends to whom I said farewell.

In the morning, with great regret, I left Ciudad Vieja. Padre Alcántara and Don Pepe accompanied me, and, to help me on my journey, the latter lent me a noble mule, and the padre an excellent servant. The exit from this mountain-girt valley was between the two great volcanoes of Agua and Fuego, rising on each side nearly fifteen thousand feet; and from between the two, so unexpectedly to me as almost to induce a burst of enthusiasm, we overlooked an immense plain, and saw the Pacific Ocean. At a league's distance we reached the village of Alotenango, where, among Indian huts, stood another gigantic church, roofless and ruined by an earthquake, and where, with the hope, in which I was not disappointed, of seeing them again, I took leave of the cura and Don Pepe. The road between the two great volcanoes was singularly interesting; one with its base cultivated, girt by a belt of thick forests, and verdant to the very summit; the other with three bare and rugged peaks, covered with dried lava and ashes, shaken by the strife of the elements within and the working of internal fires, and emitting constantly a pale blue smoke. The road

bears marks of the violent convulsions to which it has been subject. In one place the horse path lies through an immense chasm rent asunder by a natural convulsion, over which huge stones, hurled in every direction, lay in the wildest confusion; in another it crosses a deep bed of ashes, cinders, and scorified lava; and a little farther on, strata of decomposed vegetable matter covers the volcanic substances, and high shrubs and bushes have grown up, forming a thick shady arbor, fragrant as the fields of Araby the Blessed. At every step there was a strange contrast of the horrible and the beautiful. The last eruption of the Volcán de Fuego took place about twelve years ago, when flames issued from the crater and ascended to a great height; immense quantities of stones and ashes were cast out, and the race of monkeys inhabiting the neighboring woods was almost extirpated. But it can never burst forth again; its crater is no longer *la Boca del Infierno*, or the Mouth of the Infernal Regions, for, as a very respectable individual told me, it has been blessed by a priest.

After a beautiful ride under a hot sun, but shaded nearly all the way, at three o'clock we reached Escuintla, where there was another magnificent church, roofless, and again with its rich façade cracked by an earthquake. Before it were two venerable ceiba trees, and the platform commanded a splendid panoramic view of the volcanoes and mountains of Antigua.

In the streets were soldiers and drunken Indians. I rode to the house of the corregidor, Don Juan Dios de Guerra, and, with Rumaldo for a guide, I walked down to the banks of a beautiful stream which makes Escuintla in the summer months of January and February the great watering place of Guatemala. The bank was high and beautifully shaded. Descending to the river through a narrow passage between perpendicular rocks, in a romantic spot where many a Guatemalan lover has been hurried by the charming influences around into a premature outpouring of his hopes and fears, I sat down on a stone and washed my feet.

Returning, I stopped at the church. The front was cracked from top to bottom by an earthquake; the divided portions stood apart but the towers were entire. I ascended to the

top and looked down into the roofless area. On the east the dark line of forest was broken by the curling smoke of a few scattered huts and backed by verdant mountains, by the cones of volcanoes with their tops buried in the clouds, and by the Rock of Mirandilla, an immense block of bare granite held up among the mountain tops, riven and blasted by lightning. On the west the setting sun illuminated a forest of sixty miles, and beyond it shed its dying glories over the whole Pacific Ocean.

At two o'clock in the morning, under a brilliant moonlight, and with a single guide, we started for the Pacific. The road was level and wooded. We passed a *trapiche*, or sugar-mill, worked by oxen, and before daylight we reached the village of Masagua, four leagues distant, which was built in a clearing cut out of the woods. At the entrance to the village we stopped under a grove of orange trees and by the light of the moon filled our pockets and alforjas with the shining fruit. Daylight broke upon us in a forest of gigantic trees, from seventy-five to a hundred feet high and from twenty to twenty-five feet in circumference, with creepers winding around their trunks and hanging from the branches. The road was merely a path through the forest, formed by cutting away shrubs and branches.

The freshness of the morning was delightful. We had descended from the table of land called the *tierras templadas* and were now in the *tierras calientes*, but at nine o'clock the glare and heat of the sun did not penetrate the thick shade of the woods. In some places the branches of the trees, trimmed by the machete of a passing muleteer and hung with a drapery of vines and creepers bearing red and purple flowers, formed for a long distance natural arches more beautiful than any ever fashioned by man. And there were parrots and other birds of beautiful plumage flying among the trees; among them were the *guacamayas*, or great macaws, large birds clothed in red, yellow, and green, which when on the wing displayed a splendid plumage. But there were also vultures and scorpions, and, running across the road and up the trees, innumerable iguanas, or lizards, from an inch to three feet long. The road was a mere track among

the trees and perfectly desolate, though twice we met muleteers bringing up goods from the port.

At the distance of twelve miles we reached the hacienda of Naranjo, occupied by a major-domo, who looked after the cattle of the proprietor, which roamed wild in the woods. The house which stood alone in the midst of a clearing was built of poles, with a cattle yard in front where I spied a cow with a calf, which was a sign of milk. But you must catch a cow before you can milk her! The major-domo went out with a lasso and, playing upon the chord of nature, caught the calf first and then the cow, which he hauled up by the horns to a post. The hut had but one *guacal*, or drinking shell, made of a gourd, and it was so small that we sat down by the cow so as not to lose much time. We had bread, chocolate, and sausages, and after a ride of twenty-four miles, they made a glorious breakfast; but we exhausted the poor cow, and I was ashamed to look the calf in the face.

Resuming our journey, at a distance of nine miles we reached the solitary hacienda of Overo. The whole of this great plain was densely wooded and entirely uncultivated, but the soil was rich and capable of maintaining with very little labor thousands of people. Beyond Overo the country was open in places, and the sun beat down with scorching force. At one o'clock we crossed a rustic bridge, and through the opening in the trees saw the river Michatoya. We followed along its bank, and very soon we heard breaking on the shore the waves of the great southern ocean. The sound was grand and solemn, giving a strong impression of the immensity of those waters which had been rolling from the creation for more than five thousand years, unknown to civilized man. I was loth to disturb the impression, and rode slowly through the woods, listening in profound silence to the grandest music that ever fell upon my ear. The road terminated on the bank of the river, and I had crossed the Continent of America.

On the opposite side was a long sand bar, with a flagstaff, two huts built of poles and thatched with leaves, and three sheds of the same rude construction; over the bar were seen

the masts of a ship, riding on the Pacific. This was the port of Iztapa. We shouted above the roar of the waves, and a man came down to the bank, and loosing a canoe, came over for us. In the meantime, the interest of the scene was somewhat broken by a severe assault of mosquitoes and sand flies. The mules suffered as much as we; but I could not take them across with us, and was obliged to tie them under the trees. Neither Rumaldo nor my guide could be prevailed upon to remain and watch them; they said it would be death to sleep there.

The river is the outlet of the Lake of Amatitlán, and is said to be navigable from the Falls of San Pedro Mártir, seventy miles from its mouth; but there are no boats upon it, and its banks are in the wildness of primeval nature. The crossing place was at the old mouth of the river. The sand bar extends about a mile farther, and has been formed since the conquest. Landing, I walked across the sand to the house, or hut, of the captain of the port, and a few steps beyond saw the object of my journey, the boundless waters of the Pacific. When Núñez de Balboa, after crossing swamps and rivers, mountains and woods which had never been passed but by straggling Indians, came down upon the shores of this newly discovered sea, he rushed up to his middle in the waves with his buckler and sword, and took possession of it in the name of the king, his master, vowing to defend it in arms against all his enemies. But Núñez had the assurance that beyond that sea "he would find immense stores of gold, out of which people did eat and drink"; I had only to go back again. I had ridden nearly sixty miles and the sun was intensely hot, the sand burning; very soon I entered the hut and threw myself into a hammock. The hut, built of poles set up in the sand and thatched with the branches of trees, was furnished with a wooden table, a bench, and some boxes of merchandise, and was swarming with mosquitoes. The captain of the port, as he brushed them away, complained of the desolation and dreariness of the place, its isolation and separation from the world, its unhealthiness, and the misery of a man doomed to live there; and yet he feared the result

of the war, a change of administration, and being turned out of office!

Toward evening, rested and refreshed, I walked out upon the shore. The port is an open roadstead, without bay, headland, rock or reef, or anything whatever to distinguish it from the line of the coast. There is no light at night, and vessels at sea take their bearings from the great volcanoes of Antigua, more than sixty miles inland. A buoy was anchored outside of the breakers with a cable attached, and under the sheds were three large launches for embarking and disembarking cargoes. The ship whose masts we had seen as we approached lay off more than a mile from the shore. She had come from Bordeaux and since her boat had landed the supercargo and passengers, she had had no communication with the land, seeming, in fact, to be proudly independent of so desolate a place. Behind the sand bar were a few Indian huts, and Indians nearly naked were sitting by me on the shore. Yet this desolate place was once the focus of ambitious hopes, high aspirations, lust of power and gold, and romantic adventure. Here Alvarado fitted out his armament and embarked with his followers to dispute with Pizarro the riches of Peru. The sun was sinking, and the red globe touched the ocean; clouds were visible on its face, and when it disappeared, ocean and land were illuminated with a ruddy haze. I returned to the hut and threw myself into my hammock. Could it be that I was again so far from home, and that these were the waves of the great southern ocean breaking on my ears?



## Chapter XIV



*The return. Hunt for a mule. Overo. Masagua. Escuintla. Falls of San Pedro Mártir. Michatoya River. Village of San Pedro. A major-domo. San Cristóbal. Amatitlán. A roving American. Entry into Guatemala. Letter from Mr. Catherwood. Christmas Eve. Arrival of Mr. Catherwood. Plaza de Toros. A bullfight. The theatre. Official business. The aristocracy of Guatemala. State of the country. New Year's Day. Ferocity of party.*

AT three o'clock in the morning Rumaldo woke me to set out on my return to Guatemala City. The moonbeams were glancing over the water and the canoe was ready. I bade farewell to my host as he lay in his hammock, and crossed the river to find an unexpected difficulty: my spare mule had broken her halter and was nowhere to be seen. We beat about among the woods till daylight, when, concluding that she must have taken the only path open and set out for home on her own account, we saddled and rode on back to the hacienda of Overo, a distance of twenty miles. But no stray mule had passed Overo, so I stopped there and sent Rumaldo back to the port.

Very soon I became tired of waiting at the miserable hacienda and, saddling my mule, I started alone. The road was so shaded that I did not stop for the noonday heat. For twenty-one miles the road was perfectly desolate, the only sound being the occasional crash of a falling tree. At the village of Masagua I rode up to a house, at which I saw a woman under the shed. Unsaddling my mule, I got her to send a man out to cut *zacate*, and to make me some chocolate. I was so pleased with my independence that I almost

resolved to travel altogether by myself, without servant or change of apparel. In half an hour I resumed my journey. Toward sundown I met drunken Indians coming out from Escuintla, and, as I looked back over the great plain, I saw the sun fast sinking into the Pacific. It was some time after dark when I rode up to the house of the corregidor, having performed in two days a hundred and ten miles. Unfortunately, there was no *zacate* for my mule. This article is brought into the towns daily by the Indians, and every person buys just enough for the night and no more. There was not a spare lock of grass in the place. With a servant of the corregidor's I made an exploring expedition through the town, and by an affecting appeal to an old woman (enforced by treble price), I bought from under their very noses the ration of two mules and left them supperless.

I waited till two o'clock the next day for Rinaldo and the mule, and, after a vain endeavor to procure a guide to the falls of San Pedro Mártir, I set out alone direct for Guatemala City. At the distance of two leagues, in ascending a steep hill I passed a *trapiche*, or sugar mill, in a magnificent situation commanding a full view of the plain I had crossed and the ocean beyond. Two oxen were grinding sugar cane, and under a shed was a large boiling caldron for making *panela*, a brown sugar, in lumps of about two pounds each, an enormous quantity of which is consumed in the country. Here the humor seized me to make some inquiries about the falls of San Pedro Mártir. A man, out at the elbows and every other mentionable and unmentionable part of his body, who was glad to get rid of regular work, offered to conduct me. I had passed a league back the place where I ought to have turned off, so now, with my guide, I proceeded onward to the village of San Pedro, where we turned off to the right and, going back almost in the same direction, descended by a narrow path through thick woods choked with bushes into a ravine where we reached the Michatoya River, which I had crossed at Iztapa. The river was narrow and rapid, breaking wildly over a stony bed, with a high mountain on the opposite side. Following it, we reached the cataract which was partly concealed by bushes. Consisting

of four streams separated by granite rock, and precipitated from a height of about two hundred feet, it formed with the wild scenery around a striking and romantic view.

A little below the cataract were a sugar mill worked by water and an uncommonly fine hacienda, which commanded a view of the falls and at which I was very much disposed to pass the night. The major-domo, a black man, was somewhat surprised at my visit, but when he learned that I did not come to see the mill, but only the falls, he seemed to suspect that I was no better than I should be; and when I asked him if I could reach San Cristóbal before dark, he answered that I could if I started immediately. This was not exactly an invitation to stay, and I left him. It shows the want of curiosity and indolence of the people, that, though these falls are but a pleasant afternoon's ride from Escuintla, which for two months is thronged with visitors from Guatemala, nobody ever visits them.

Hurrying back by the same wild path, we reached the main road, and, as it was late, I hired my guide to go on with me to San Cristóbal. We passed through the village of San Pedro, a collection of miserable huts with an *estanco*, or place for the sale of *aguardiente*, which was thronged with half-intoxicated Indians. As we advanced, clouds began to gather around the mountains, and there was every appearance of heavy rain. I had no cloak or greatcoat and, being particularly apprehensive of fevers and rheumatisms, after riding about a mile I returned to San Pedro. The most respectable citizens of the place were reeling round the *estanco*. They urged me to stop, but my guide said that they were a bad set and advised me to return and pass the night at the sugar mill. Presuming that he knew the people of whom he spoke better than I did, I was in no way inclined to disregard his caution. It was after dark when we reached the *trapiche*. Some of the workmen were sitting around a fire smoking; others were lying asleep under a shed; and I had but to

*"Look around and choose my ground,  
And take my rest."*

I inquired for the major-domo and was escorted to a mud house. In the dark I heard a harsh voice and, presently by

the light of a pine stick, I saw an old and forbidding face, and by its side that of a young woman so soft and sweet that it seemed to appear expressly for the sake of contrast; and these two were one. I was disposed to pity the young wife; but the old major-domo was a noble fellow in heart, and she managed him so beautifully that he never suspected it. He was about to go to bed, but on my arrival he sent men out to cut *zacate*; both he and his wife were pleased that accident had brought me to their hut. The workmen sympathized in their humor, and we sat for two hours around a large table under the shed, with two candles sticking up in their own tallow. They could not comprehend that I had been to the top of the Volcán de Agua, and then had ridden down to the coast merely to see the Pacific. One of the men, a fine, open-faced young man, had a great desire to travel, but he did not like to go away from home. I offered to take him with me and give him good wages. The subject was discussed aloud: It was an awful thing for him to go away from home, and among strangers, where no one would care for him. His house was the outside of the major-domo's hut, but his home was in the hearts of his friends, and perhaps some of them would be dead before he returned. The wife of the major-domo seemed a good spirit in tempering the hearts and conduct of these wild and half-naked men. I promised to give him money to pay his expenses home when he should wish to return, and before we retired he agreed to go with me. At three o'clock the old major-domo was shouting in my ears. I was not familiar with my own name with the *don* prefixed, and thought he had "waked up the wrong passenger." The courage of the young man who wished to travel failed him, and he did not make his appearance; in the expectation of his going, my guide also did not come, so I set out alone.

Before daylight I passed for the third time through the village of San Pedro, and a little beyond overtook a bundle on horseback which proved to be a boy and a woman with one poncho over both. The River Michatoya was foaming and breaking in a long succession of rapids on our right, as we rode on together to San Cristóbal. I rode up to the convent, pounced upon the cura at the witching hour of break-

fast, and, mounting again, rode around the base of the Volcán de Agua, with its cultivated fields and belt of forest and verdure to the top. Opposite was another volcano, its sides covered with immense forests. Between the two I passed a single *trapiche* belonging to a convent of Dominican friars; in a large and beautiful valley, I passed hot springs, smoking for more than a mile along the road, and then entered among the nopals, or cochineal plantations, of Amatitlán. On both sides were high clay fences, and the nopals within the enclosures were more extensive than those of Antigua, and more valuable, for though Amatitlán is only twenty-five miles from Antigua, the climate here is so different they can produce two crops in each season.

Approaching the town, I remembered that Mr. Handy, who had traveled from the United States through Texas and Mexico with a caravan of wild animals, had told me in New York of an American in his employ who had been left at this place to take charge of a cochineal plantation, and I was curious to see how this man looked and flourished in such employment. I had forgotten his name, but when I inquired on the road for an American *del Norte*, I was directed to the nopal of which he had charge. It was one of the largest in the place and contained four hundred thousand plants. I rode up to a small building in the middle of the plantation, which looked like a summerhouse, and was surrounded by workmen, one of whom announced me as a "Spaniard," as the Indians generally called foreigners. Dismounting and giving my mule to an Indian, I entered and found Don Enrique sitting at a table with an account book before him, settling accounts with the workmen. He was dressed in the *cotón*, or jacket of the country, and had a very long beard, but I should have recognized him anywhere as an American. I addressed him in English, and he stared at me, as if startled by a familiar sound, and answered in Spanish. By degrees he comprehended the matter. He was under thirty, from Rhinebeck Landing on the Hudson River where his father kept a store, and his name was Henry Pawling. He had been a clerk in New York and then in Mexico. Induced by a large offer and a strong disposition to ramble and see

the country, he had accepted the proposal from Mr. Handy. His business had been to go on before the caravan, hire a place, give notice, and make preparation for the exhibition of the animals. In this capacity he had traveled all over Mexico and from thence to Guatemala; it had been seven years since he left home. Since parting with Mr. Handy he had not spoken a word of his own language and, as he spoke it now, it was more than half Spanish. I need not say that he was glad to see me. He conducted me over the plantation and explained the details of the curious process of making cochineal. He was somewhat disappointed in his expectations and spoke with great feeling of home; but when I offered to forward letters, he said he had resolved never to write to his parents again, nor to inform them of his existence, until he retrieved his fortunes and saw a prospect of returning rich. He accompanied me into the town of Amatitlán. As it was late, and as I expected to return there, I did not stop to visit the lake but continued direct for Guatemala.

The road lay across a plain, with a high, precipitous, and verdant wall on the left. At a distance of a league we ascended a steep hill to the tableland of Guatemala. I regret that I cannot communicate to the reader the highest pleasure of my journey in Central America, that derived from the extraordinary beauty of scenery constantly changing. At the time I thought this the most delightful ride I had had in the country.

On the way I overtook a man and his wife on horseback, he with a gamecock under his arm, and she with a guitar. A little boy was hidden away among bedding on a luggage mule and four lads were with them on foot, each with a gamecock wrapped in matting with only the head and tail visible. They were going to Guatemala to pass the Christmas holidays, and with this respectable party I entered the gate of the city on the eighth day after my departure. I found a letter from Mr. Catherwood, dated at Esquipulas, advising me that after he had been robbed by his servant and taken ill, he had left the ruins and gone to Don Gregorio's, and that he was then on his journey to Guatemala. He also

informed me that my messenger had passed through Copán and gone on he did not know where. I was in great distress, and resolved, after a day's rest, to set off in search of him.

I dressed myself and went to a party at the home of Señor Zebadúa, formerly minister to England, where I surprised the *guatemaltecos* by the tour I had made, and particularly by having come alone from Iztapa. Here I met Mr. Chatfield, her Britannic majesty's consul-general, and Mr. Skinner, who had arrived during my absence. It was Christmas Eve, the night of *El Nacimiento*, or birth of Christ. At one end of the *sala* was a raised platform with a green floor and decorated with branches of pine and cypress, on which birds were sitting; pieces of looking glass and sandpaper, and figures of men and animals represented a rural scene in which there was an arbor and a wax doll in a cradle—in short, the grotto of Bethlehem and the infant Saviour. Always, at this season of the year, every house in Guatemala has its *Nacimiento*, according to the wealth and taste of the proprietor. In time of peace the figure of the Saviour is adorned with family jewels, pearls, and precious stones, and at night every house is open, and the citizens, without acquaintance or invitation or distinction of rank or persons, go from house to house visiting; the week of *El Nacimiento* is the gayest of the year. Unfortunately, at this time it was observed only in form; the state of the city was too uncertain to permit the general opening of houses and running in the streets at night. Carrera's soldiers might enter.

The party was small, but consisted of the élite of Guatemala. It commenced with supper, after which followed dancing, and, I am obliged to add, smoking. The room was badly lighted, and the company, from the precarious state of the country, not gay; but the dancing was kept up till twelve o'clock, when the ladies put on their mantillas and we all went to the cathedral where were to be performed the imposing ceremonies of the Christmas Eve. The floor of the church was crowded with citizens and a large concourse from the villages around. Mr. Savage accompanied me home, and we did not get to bed till three o'clock in the morning.

The bells had done ringing and Christmas mass had been said in all the churches before I awoke. In the afternoon was the first bullfight of the season. My friend Vidaurre had called for me, and I was in the act of going to the Plaza de Toros, when there was a loud knock at the *puerta cochera*, and in rode Mr. Catherwood. He was armed to the teeth, pale and thin, and most happy at having reached Guatemala, but he was not half so happy as I was to see him. He was in advance of his luggage, but I dressed him up and carried him immediately to the Plaza de Toros.

The Plaza de Toros stands near the church of El Calvario, at the end of the Calle Real, in shape and form like the Roman amphitheatre. It was about three hundred and fifty feet long and two hundred and fifty broad, and was capable of containing, as we supposed, about eight thousand people, at least one-fourth of the population of Guatemala. When we arrived, it was crowded with spectators of both sexes and all classes, the best and the vilest in the city, but all were conducting themselves with perfect propriety. We recognized several parties; in fact, the greater part of our Guatemalan acquaintances were present.

The seats commenced about ten feet above the area, with a corridor and open wooden fence in front to protect the spectators. Astride sat Carrera's disorderly soldiers to keep order. At one end, underneath the corridor, was a large door through which the bull was to be let in. At the other end, separated by a partition from the part occupied by the rest of the spectators, was a large unoccupied box, formerly intended for the captain-general and other principal officers of government, and now reserved for Carrera. Underneath was a military band composed mostly of Indians. Notwithstanding the collection of people and the expectation of an animating sport, there was no clapping or stamping, or other expression of impatience and anxiety for the performance to begin.

At length Carrera entered the captain-general's box, dressed in a badly fitting blue military frock coat embroidered with gold; he was attended by Monte Rosa and other



richly dressed officers, the *alcalde*, and members of the municipality. All eyes were turned toward him, as when a king or emperor enters his box at the theatre in Europe. A year before he had been hunted among the mountains with a reward for his body "dead or alive," and nine-tenths of those who now looked upon him would then have shut the city against him as a robber, murderer, and outcast.

Soon after, the *picadores* entered. They were eight in number and mounted, each carrying a lance and a red poncho. After galloping round the area, they stopped with their lances opposite the door at which the bull was to enter. The door was pulled open by a *padre*, a great cattle proprietor, who owned the bulls of the day. The animal rushed out into the area, kicking up his heels as if in play, but at the sight of the line of horsemen and lances he turned about and ran back quicker than he had entered. The *padre's* bull was an ox and, like a sensible beast, he would rather run than fight; but the door was closed upon him, and perforce he ran around the area, looking up to the spectators for mercy, and below for an outlet of escape. The horsemen followed, "prodding" him with their lances; and all round the area, men and boys on the fence threw barbed darts with ignited fireworks attached, which, sticking in his flesh and exploding on every part of his body, irritated him, and sometimes made him turn on his pursuers. The *picadores* led him on by flaring ponchos before him; as he pressed them, the skill of the *picador* consisted in throwing the poncho over his horns so as to blind him, and then fixing in his neck, just behind his jaw, a sort of balloon of fireworks. When this was done successfully it created shouts of applause.

The government, in an excess of humanity, had forbidden the killing of bulls, restricting the fight to worrying and torturing. Consequently, it was entirely different from the bullfight in Spain, and wanted even the exciting interest of a fierce struggle for life, and the chance of the *picador* being gored to death or tossed over among the spectators. But, watching the earnest gaze of thousands, it was easy to imagine the intense excitement of a martial age, when gladi-

ators fought in the arena before the nobility and beauty of Rome.

Our poor ox, after being tired out, was allowed to withdraw. Others followed and went through the same round. All the padre's bulls were oxen. Sometimes a picador on foot was chased to the fence under a general laugh of the spectators. After the last ox had run his rounds, the picadores withdrew, and men and boys jumped over into the arena in such numbers that they fairly hustled the ox. The noise and confusion, and the flaring of colored ponchos, the running and tumbling, attacking and retreating, and the clouds of dust made this the most stirring scene of any. But altogether it was a puerile exhibition, and the better classes, among whom was my fair countrywoman, regarded it merely as an occasion for meeting acquaintances.

In the evening we went to the theatre, which opened for the first time. A large building had been commenced in the city, but in one of the revolutions it had been demolished and the work abandoned. The performance was in the courtyard of a house. The stage was erected across one of the corners; the patio was the pit, and the corridor was divided by temporary partitions into boxes. The audience sent beforehand, or servants brought with them, their own seats. We had invitations to the box of Señor Vidaurre. Carrera was there, sitting on a bench a little elevated against the wall of the house and at the right hand of Rivera Paz, the chief of the state. Some of his officers were with him in their showy uniforms, but he had laid his aside; he had on his black bombazet jacket and pantaloons and was very unpretending in his deportment. I considered him the greatest man in Guatemala, and made it a point to shake hands with him in passing.

The first piece was *Saïde*,<sup>1</sup> a tragedy. The company consisted entirely of *guatemaltecos*, and their performance was

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1. The editor has been unable to identify a play by this name. Possibly the play was *Zaïre*, the tragedy by Voltaire. *Saïde* may represent what Stephens thought he heard when his Guatemalan friends tried to pronounce the foreign word *Zaïre*.

very good. There was no change of scenery, and, when the curtain fell, all lighted cigars, ladies included; fortunately, there was an open courtyard for the escape of smoke. When the performance was over, the boxes waited till the pit was emptied. Special care had been taken in placing sentinels, and all went home quietly.

During the week there was an attempt at gaiety, but it was all more or less blended with religious solemnities. One was that of the Novena, or term of nine days' praying to the Virgin. One lady, who was distinguished for the observance of this term, had an altar built across the whole end of the *sala*, with three steps decorated with flowers and a platform adorned with looking glasses, pictures, and figures, in the center of which was an image of the Virgin richly dressed. The whole was ornamented in a way impossible for me to describe, but which can be imagined in a place where natural flowers are in the greatest profusion and artificial ones made more perfect than in Europe, and where the ladies have extraordinary taste in the disposition of them. When I entered, the gentlemen were in an anteroom, with hats, canes, and small swords; and in the *sala* the ladies, with female servants cleanly dressed, were on their knees praying. In front of the fairy altar was one who seemed a fairy herself; while her lips moved, her bright eye was roving, and she looked more worthy of being kneeled to than the pretty image before her, and as if she thought so too.

In regard to my official business I was perfectly at a loss what to do. In Guatemala all were on one side; all said that there was no Federal government. And Mr. Chatfield, the British consul-general, whose opinion I respected more, concurred; he had even published a circular denying its existence. But the Federal government claimed to be in existence, and the bare suggestion of General Morazán's marching against Guatemala excited consternation. Several times there were rumors to that effect, one being that he had actually determined to do so, and that not a single priest would be spared, and that the streets would run with blood. The boldest partisans trembled for their lives. Morazán had never been beaten; Carrera had always run before him, and

they had no faith in his being able to defend them, and they could not defend themselves. At all events, I had as yet heard only one side and did not consider myself justified in assuming that there was no government. I was bound to make "diligent search," and then I might return, in legal phrase, *cepi corpus*,<sup>2</sup> or *non est inventus*,<sup>3</sup> according to circumstances.

For this purpose I determined to go to San Salvador, which was formerly, and still claimed to be, the capital of the Confederation and the seat of the Federal government, or, rather, to Cojutepeque, to which place the government had been lately transferred on account of earthquakes at San Salvador. This project was not without its difficulties. One Rascón, with an insurgent and predatory band, occupied an intervening district of country, acknowledging neither party and fighting under his own flag. Mr. Chatfield and Mr. Skinner had come by sea, a circuitous route, to avoid him; and Captain Le Nonvel, master of a French ship lying at the port of San Salvador, who arrived in Guatemala almost on a run, having ridden sixty miles the last day over a mountainous country, reported horrible atrocities. He said that three men had been murdered near San Vicente, on their way to the fair at Esquipulas, and their faces so disfigured that they could not be recognized. Immediately on his arrival he sent a courier to order his ship up to Iztapa merely to take him back and save him from returning by land. I had signified my intention of going to San Salvador to the state government; they were dissatisfied with my going at all, but offered me an escort of soldiers, warning me, however, that if we met any of Morazán's soldiers there would certainly be a fight. This was not at all pleasant. I was loth to travel a third time the road to Iztapa, but, under the circumstances, I accepted Captain Le Nonvel's invitation to take a passage in his ship.

Meanwhile I passed my time in social visiting. In our own city the aristocracy is called by the diplomatic corps at

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2. "I have found the body."

3. "It has not been found."

Washington "the aristocracy of streets." In Guatemala it is the aristocracy of houses, as certain families live in the houses built by their fathers at the time of the foundation of the city, and they are really aristocratic old mansions. These families, by reason of certain monopolies of importation, acquired under the Spanish dominion immense wealth and rank as "merchant princes." Still they were excluded from all offices and all part in the government. At the time of the revolution one of these families was noble with the rank of marquise, but its head tore off the insignia of his rank and joined the revolutionary party. Next in position to the officers of the crown, these families thought that, emancipated from the yoke of Spain, they would have the government in their own hands; and so they had, but it was only for a short time. The principles of equal rights began to be understood, and they were put aside. For ten years they had been in obscurity, but accidentally they were again in power, and at the time of my visit ruled in social as well as political life. I do not wish to speak harshly of them, for they were the only people who constituted society. My intercourse was almost exclusively with them; my fair countrywoman was one of them; I am indebted to them for much kindness; and, besides, they are personally amiable. But I speak of them as public men; I did not sympathize with them in politics.

To me the position of the country seemed most critical, and from a cause which in all Spanish America had never operated before. At the time of the first invasion a few hundred Spaniards, by superior bravery and skill, and with more formidable arms, had conquered the whole Indian population. Naturally peaceable, and kept without arms, the conquered people had remained quiet and submissive during the three centuries of Spanish dominion. In the civil wars following the independence they had borne but a subordinate part, and down to the time of Carrera's rising they were entirely ignorant of their own physical strength. But this fearful discovery had now been made. The Indians constituted three-fourths of the inhabitants of Guatemala. They were the hereditary owners of the soil, and, for the first time since they fell under the dominion of the whites, they were organized and armed under a chief of their own,

who chose for the moment to sustain the Central Party. I did not sympathize with that party, for I believed that in their hatred of the Liberals they were courting a third power that might destroy them both, that they were consorting with a wild animal which might at any moment turn and rend them in pieces. I believed that they were playing upon the ignorance and prejudices of the Indians. Through the priests, they played upon their religious fanaticism, amusing them with fêtes and church ceremonies, and persuading them that the Liberals aimed at a demolition of churches and the destruction of the priests. They were hurrying back the country into darkness and, in the general heaving of the elements, there was not a man of nerve enough among them, with the influence of name and station, to rally round him the strong and honest men of the country, reorganize the shattered republic, and save it from the disgrace and danger of truckling to an ignorant, uneducated Indian boy.

Such were my sentiments. Of course I avoided expressing them but, because I did not denounce their opponents, some looked coldly upon me. With them political differences severed all ties. Our worst party abuse is moderate and mild compared with the terms in which they speak of each other. We seldom do more than call men ignorant, incompetent, dishonest, dishonorable, false, corrupt, subverters of the Constitution, and bought with British gold; but here a political opponent is a robber, an assassin, and it is praise to admit that he is not a bloodthirsty cutthroat. We complain that our ears are constantly offended and our passions roused by angry political discussions; yet here it would have been delightful to hear a good, honest, hot, and angry political dispute. I traveled in every state, and never heard such a dispute, for I never met two men together who differed in political opinions. Defeated partisans are shot or banished, they run away or get a moral lockjaw, but they never dare express their opinions before one of the dominant party. We have just passed through a violent political struggle; <sup>4</sup> twenty millions of people have been divided almost man to

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4. Stephens was writing this book in 1840 when "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" won the presidential election.

man, friend against friend, neighbor against neighbor, brother against brother, and son against father. Honest differences of opinion, ambition, want, and lust of power and office, have roused passions sometimes to fierceness. Two millions of men highly excited have spoken out their thoughts and sentiments fearlessly and openly. They have all been counted, and the first rule in arithmetic has decided between them. But the defeated party are still permitted to live in the country; their wives and children are spared; nay, more, they may grumble in the streets and hang out their banners of defiance, of continued and determined opposition; and, more than all, the pillars of the republic are not shaken! Among a million of disappointed men, never, with all the infirmities of human passion, has one breathed resistance to the Constitution and laws. The world has never presented such a spectacle, such a proof of the capacity of the people for self-government. Long may it continue! May the tongue wither that dares preach resistance to the ballot boxes; and may the moral influence of our example reach our distracted sister republics, staying the sword of persecution in the hands of victors and crushing the spirit of revolution in a defeated party.

January 1, 1840. This day, so full of home associations—snow and red noses and blue lips out of doors, and blazing fires and beauteous faces within—opened in Guatemala like a morning in spring. The sun seemed to rejoice in the beauty of the land it shone upon. The flowers were blooming in the courtyards, and the mountains, visible above the tops of the houses, were smiling in verdure. The bells of thirty-eight churches and convents proclaimed the coming of another year. The shops were shut as on a Sunday; there was no market in the plaza. Gentlemen well dressed, and ladies in black mantas were crossing the plaza to attend grand mass in the cathedral. Mozart's music swelled through the aisles. A priest in a strange tongue proclaimed morality, religion, and love of country. The floor of the church was thronged with whites, mestizos, and Indians.

On a high bench opposite the pulpit sat the chief of the state, and by his side Carrera, again dressed in his rich uniform. I leaned against a pillar opposite and watched Car-

rera's face; if I read him right, he had forgotten war and the stains of blood upon his hands, and his very soul was filled with fanatic enthusiasm, exactly as the priests would have him. I did verily believe that he was honest in his impulses and would do right if he knew how. They who undertake to guide him have a fearful responsibility. The service ended, and a way was cleared through the crowd. Carrera, accompanied by the priests and the chief of the state, awkward in his movements, with his eyes fixed on the ground, or with furtive glances, as if ill at ease in being an object of so much attention, walked down the aisle. A thousand ferocious-looking soldiers were drawn up before the door. A wild burst of music greeted him, and the faces of the men glowed with devotion to their chief. A broad banner was unfurled, with stripes of black and red; there was a device of a death's head and legs in the center, and on one side the words *Viva la religion!* and on the other *Paz o muerte a los Liberales!* Carrera placed himself at their head, and with Rivera Paz by his side, and the fearful banner floating in the air, and wild and thrilling music, and the stillness of death around, they escorted the chief of the state to his house. How different from New Year's Day at home!

Fanatic as I knew the people to be in religion, and violent as they were in political animosities, I did not believe that they would countenance such an outrage as flaunting in the plaza of the capital a banner linking together the support of religion and the death or submission of the Liberal Party. Afterward, in a conversation with the chief of the state, I referred to this banner. He had not noticed it, but thought that the last clause was *Paz o muerte a los que no la quieren*, "to those who do not wish it." This does not alter its atrocious character, and only adds to fanaticism what it takes from party spirit. I think, however, that I am right, for on the return of the soldiers to the plaza, Mr. Catherwood and I followed the banner till, as we thought, the standard-bearer contracted its folds expressly to hide it and some of the officers looked at us so suspiciously that we withdrew.

For the sake of home associations, I called on my fair countrywoman, and dined at Mr. Hall's. In the afternoon I went to the cockpit, a large circular building handsomely



proportioned, with a high seat for the judges. When the judges rang a bell as a signal for the fight, there commenced a clamor: "I offer five dollars!" "I offer twenty," etc. I am happy to say that in this crowded den I saw but one man whom I had ever seen before. From the cockpit I went to the bullfight, and then to the theatre. The reader will admit that I made a brilliant beginning to the year 1840.

## Chapter XV

*Hunt for a government. Diplomatic difficulties. Departure from Guatemala. Lake of Amatitlán. Attack of fever and ague. Overo. Iztapa. A French merchant ship. Port of Acajutla. Illness. Sonsonate. The government found. Visit to the volcano of Izalco. Course of the eruptions. Descent from the volcano.*

ON Sunday, the fifth of January, I rose to set out in search of a government. Don Manuel Pavón, with his usual kindness, brought me a packet of letters of introduction to his friends in San Salvador. But Mr. Catherwood, who intended to accompany me to the Pacific, and I had not yet packed up, the muleteer had not made his appearance, and my passport had not been sent to me. Captain Le Nonvel waited till nine o'clock and then went on in advance. In the midst of my confusion I received a visit from a distinguished canónigo. The reverend prelate was surprised at my setting out on that day but, as I was about to plead my necessities as an excuse for traveling on the Sabbath, he relieved me by adding that there was to be a dinner party, a bullfight, and a play, and he wondered that I could resist such temptations.

At eleven o'clock the muleteer came with his mules, his wife, and a ragged little son. Mr. Savage, who was always my help through the little vexations attendant upon doing anything in that country, as well as in more important matters, returned from the Government House with word that my passport had been sent to my house. I knew that the government was displeased with my purpose of going to the capital. The night before it had been currently reported

that I intended to present my credentials at San Salvador and to recognize the existence of the Federal government. And newspapers, received the same night by the courier from Mexico, were burdened with accounts of an invasion of that country by the Texans. I had before received a piece of information that was new to me, and of which it was considered diplomatic that I should profess ignorance, that is, that, though not so avowed, the Texans were supported and urged on by the government of the United States. We were considered here as bent upon the conquest of Mexico, and, of course, Guatemala would come next. The odium of our ambitious pretensions increased the feeling of coldness and distrust toward me arising from my not having attached myself to the dominant party. In general I was considered as the successor of Mr. DeWitt. It was known among politicians that proceedings were pending for the renewal of a treaty and that our government had a claim for the destruction of property of our citizens in one of the revolutions of the country, but some imagined that the special object of my mission was very deep and in favor of the party of San Salvador.

When Mr. Savage returned without my passport, I suspected an intention to embarrass me and make me lose the opportunity of going by sea, so I went immediately to the Government House, but I received the same answer that had been given to Mr. Savage. I thereupon requested another passport, but the secretary of state objected on the ground that none could be made out on that day. There were several clerks in the office, and I urged my pressing necessity, the actual departure of Captain Le Nonvel, my seasonable application, and the promise made me that it would be sent to my house. After an unpleasant parley, a passport was given me, but it was one which did not assign to me any official character. When I pointed out the omission, the secretary said that I had not presented my credentials. I answered that my credentials were to the general government and not to the State of Guatemala, which alone he represented, but he persisted that it was not the custom of his government to recognize an official character unless he

presented his credentials. His government had been in existence about six months, and during that time no person claiming to be official had been near the country. I put into his hands my passport from my own government and, reminding him that I had been arrested and imprisoned once, I assured him that I should at all events set out for San Salvador and wished to know definitively whether he would give me such a passport as I had a right to ask for. After much hesitation, and with a very bad grace, he interlined before the official title the words *con el carácter*.

I make great allowance for party feeling in a country where political divisions are matters of life and death, and, more particularly, I made allowance for Don Joaquín Durand, whose brother, a priest, had been shot a short time before by the Morazán party. But this attempt to embarrass my movements by depriving me of the benefit of official character excited a feeling of indignation which I did not attempt to conceal. To refuse to accept the passport altogether or to wait a day for remonstrance would cause me to lose my passage by sea and make it necessary for me to either undertake a dangerous journey by land or abandon going to the capital. This, I believe, was precisely what was wished, and I was resolved not to be prevented by any indirect means. I only needed a passport to the port; the best they could give I did not value very highly and in San Salvador it would be utterly worthless. Therefore, with the uncourteous paper thus ungraciously bestowed, I returned to the house, and at two o'clock we started. It was the hottest hour of the day and when we passed the gate the sun was scorching. Late as it was, our muleteer had not finished his leave-taking. His wife and little son accompanied him, and at some distance outside we were obliged to stop in the hot sun and wait till they came up. We were extremely glad when they exchanged their last embraces and the wife and son turned off for their home in Mixco.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, we diverged from the regular road for the purpose of passing by the Lake of Amatitlán, but it was dark when we reached the top of the high range of mountains which bounds that beautiful

water. Looking down, it seemed like a gathering of fog in the bottom of a deep valley. The descent was by a rough zigzag path on the side of the mountain, very steep, and, in the extreme darkness, difficult and dangerous. We felt happy when we reached the bank of the lake, though still a little above it. The mountains rose around it like a wall and cast over it a gloom deeper than the shade of night. We rode for some distance with the lake on our left and a high and perpendicular mountainside on our right. A cold wind had succeeded the intense heat of the day, and when we reached Amatlán, I was perfectly chilled. We found Captain Le Nonvel in the house he had indicated. It was nine o'clock, and, not having touched anything to eat since seven in the morning, we were prepared to do justice to the supper he had provided for us.

To avoid the steep descent to the lake with the cargo mules, our muleteer had picked up a guide for us on the road and had gone on himself direct, but to our surprise he had not yet arrived. While at supper we heard an uproar in the street, and a man ran in to tell us that a mob was murdering our muleteer. The Captain, a frequent visitor to the country, said it was probably a general machete fight, and he cautioned us against going out. While we were in the corridor, hesitating, the uproar was hurrying toward us. The gate burst open, and a crowd rushed in dragging with them our muleteer—that respectable husband and father—with his machete drawn and so tipsy that he could hardly stand, but wanting to fight all the world. With difficulty we got him entangled among some saddle gear; he dropped down, and, after vain efforts to rise, he fell asleep.

I woke the next morning with a violent headache and pain in all my bones. Nevertheless, we started at daylight and rode till five o'clock in the evening. The sun and heat increased the pain in my head, and for three hours before reaching Escuintla I was in great suffering. I avoided going to the corregidor's, for I knew that his sleeping apartment was open to all who came, and I wanted quiet. But I made a great mistake in stopping at the house of the captain's friend, the proprietor of an *estanco*, or distillery for making

*aguardiente*. He gave us a large room directly back of a store and separated from it by a low board partition open over the top; the store was constantly filled with noisy and wrangling drinking men and women. My bed was next to the partition, and we had eight or ten men in our room. All night I had a violent fever, and in the morning I was unable to move. Captain Le Nonvel regretted it, but he could not wait, as his ship was ready to lie off and on without coming to anchor. Mr. Catherwood had me removed to a storeroom filled with casks and demijohns, where, except for occasional entries to draw off liquor, I was quiet; but the odor was sickening.

In the afternoon the fever left me, and we rode to Masagua, a level and shady road of four leagues. To our surprise and great satisfaction, we found Captain Le Nonvel at the house at which I had stopped on my return from Iztapa. He had advanced two leagues beyond this place when he heard a band of robbers at some distance farther on, and returned to wait for company, sending, in the meantime, to Escuintla for a guard of soldiers. We afterward learned that the "robbers" were a body of exiles, who, having been expelled from Guatemala, were crossing from Quezaltenango to San Salvador; but, being in desperate circumstances, they were nevertheless dangerous persons to meet on the road.

The hut at which we stopped was hardly large enough for the family that occupied it, and our luggage, with two hammocks and a *catre*, drove them into a very small space. Crying children are said to be healthy, and, if so, the good woman of this house was blessed; besides this, a hen was hatching a brood of chickens under my head. During the night a party of soldiers entered the village in pursuance of the Captain's requisition and passed on to clear the road. We started before daylight but, as the sun rose, my fever returned, and at eleven o'clock when we reached Overo I could go no farther.

I have before remarked that this hacienda is a great stopping-place for people from Iztapa and the salt works; unfortunately for me, several parties of muleteers in apprehension of the robbers had joined together and, starting at

midnight, had already finished their day's labor. In the afternoon a wild boar was hunted, which our muleteer, with my gun, killed; there was a great feast in cooking and eating it. The noise racked my brain, and night brought no relief; quiet was all I wanted, but that it seemed impossible to have. In addition, the rancho was more than usually abundant in fleas. All night I had violent fever. Mr. Catherwood, who, from not killing anyone at Copán had conceived a great opinion of his medical skill, gave me a powerful dose of medicine, and toward morning I fell asleep.

We started at daylight and arrived at Iztapa at nine o'clock. Captain Le Nonvel had not yet gone on board. Two French ships were then lying off the port: the *Belle Poule* and the *Mélanie*, both from Bordeaux, the latter being the vessel of Captain Le Nonvel. He had accounts to arrange with the captain of the *Belle Poule*, and we started first for that vessel.

I have before remarked that Iztapa is an open roadstead, without bay, headland, rock, reef, or any protection whatever from the open sea. Generally the sea is, as its name imports, pacific, and the waves roll calmly to the shore; but even in the smoothest times there is a breaker, and to pass this, as a part of the fixtures of the port, an anchor is dropped outside with a buoy attached from which a long cable is secured on shore. The longboat of the *Mélanie* lay hard ashore, stern first, with a cable run through a groove in her bows and passing through the sculling-hole in the stern. She was filled with goods, among which we took our seats. The mate sat in the stern, and, taking advantage of a wave that raised the bows, gave the order to haul. The wet rope whizzed past, and the boat moved till, with the receding wave, it struck heavily on the sand. Another wave and another haul, and she swung clear of the bottom. Meeting the coming wave and hauling fast on the receding, in a few minutes we passed the breakers; the rope was thrown out of the groove and the sailors took to their oars.

It was one of the most beautiful of those beautiful days on the Pacific. The great ocean was as calm as a lake; the fresh-

ness of the morning still rested upon the water, and already I felt revived. In a few minutes we reached the *Belle Poule*, one of the most beautiful ships that ever floated, and considered a model in the French commercial marine. The whole deck was covered with an awning, having a border trimmed with scarlet and fluttering in the wind. The quarter-deck was raised and protected by a fanciful awning; it was furnished with settees, couches, and chairs, and on a brass railing in front sat two beautiful Peruvian parrots. The door of the cabin was high enough to admit a tall man without stooping. On each side were four staterooms, and the stern was divided into two chambers for the captain and supercargo, each with a window in it and furnished with a bed (not a berth), a sofa, books, drawers, writing-desk, and everything necessary for luxurious living on shipboard—just the comforts with which one would like to circumnavigate the world. She was on a trading voyage from Bordeaux with an assorted cargo of French goods. She had touched at the ports of Peru, Chile, Panama, and Central America, and had left at each place merchandise to be sold, the proceeds to be invested in the products of the country. She was now bound for Mazatlán, on the coast of Mexico, whence she would return and pick up her cargo, and in two years return to Bordeaux. We had a *déjeuner à la fourchette*, abounding in Paris luxuries, with wines and *café*, as in Paris, to which, fortunately for the ship's stores, I did not bring my accustomed vigor. There was style in everything, even to the name of the steward, who was called the *maître d'hôtel*.

At two o'clock we went on board the *Mélanie*. She was about the same size as the *Belle Poule*, and if we had not seen the latter ship first, we should have been delighted with her. The comfort and luxury of these "homes on the sea" were in striking contrast with the poverty and misery of the desolate shore. The captain of the *Belle Poule* came on board to dine. It was a pleasure to us to see the delight with which these two Bordeaux men and their crews met on this distant shore. Cape Horn, Peru, and Chile were the subjects of conversation, and we found on board a file of papers which



gave us the latest news from our friends in the Sandwich Islands. Mr. Catherwood and the captain of the *Belle Poule* remained on board the *Mélanie* till we got under way. We bade them good-by over the railing and, as the evening breeze filled our sails, for a few moments we saw them, a dark spot on the water; then the wave sank and we lost sight of them entirely.

I remained on deck but a short time. I was the only passenger, and the maître d'hôtel made me a bed with settees directly under the stern windows, but I could not sleep. Even with windows and doors wide open the cabin was excessively warm; the air was heated, and it was full of mosquitoes. The captain and mates slept on deck. I had been advised not to do so, but at twelve o'clock I went out. It was bright starlight; the sails were flapping against the mast, the ocean was like a sheet of glass, and the coast dark, irregular, gloomy, and portentous with volcanoes. The Great Bear was almost upon me, and the North Star, lower than I had ever seen it before, like myself, seemed waning. A young sailor of the watch on deck spoke to me of the deceitfulness of the sea, of shipwrecks, of the wreck of an American vessel which he had fallen in with on his first cruise in the Pacific, and of his beautiful and beloved France. The freshness of the air was grateful and, while he was entertaining me, I stretched myself on a settee and fell asleep.

The next day I had a recurrence of fever, which continued upon me all day, and the captain put me under ship's discipline. In the morning the maître d'hôtel stood by me with cup and spoon, "*Monsieur, un vomitif,*" and in the afternoon, "*Monsieur, une purge.*" When we arrived at Acajutla I was unable to go ashore. As soon as we cast anchor, the captain landed and, before leaving for Sonsonate, engaged mules and men for me. The port of Acajutla is not quite so open as that of Iztapa, having on the south a slight projecting headland of rock. In the offing were a *goélette* brig for a port in Peru, a Danish schooner for Guayaquil, and an English brig from London. All the afternoon I sat on the upper deck. Some of the sailors were asleep and others play-

ing cards. In sight were six volcanoes; one was constantly emitting smoke, and another flames. At night the volcano of Izalco seemed a steady ball of fire.

The next morning the mate took me ashore in the launch. The process was the same as at Iztapa, and we were detained some time by a boat of the English vessel occupying the cable. As soon as we struck the shore, a crowd of Indians, naked except for a band of cotton cloth which was wound around the loins and passed between the legs, backed up against the side of the boat. I mounted the shoulders of one of them; as the wave receded he carried me several paces onward, then stopped and braced himself against the coming wave. I clung to his neck, but was fast sliding down his slippery sides when he deposited me on the shore of El Salvador, called by the Indians "Cuscatlán," or "the land of riches." Alvarado, on his voyage to Peru, had been the first Spaniard to set foot upon this shore; as I took special care to keep my feet from getting wet, I could but think of the hardy frames as well as iron nerves of the conquerors of America.

The mate and sailors took leave of me and returned to the ship. I walked along the shore and up a steep hill. It was only eight o'clock, but already it was excessively hot. On the bank fronting the sea were the ruins of large warehouses, which had been occupied as receptacles for merchandise under the Spanish dominion, when all the ports of America were closed against foreign vessels. In one corner of the ruined building was a sort of guardroom where a few soldiers were eating tortillas and one was cleaning his musket. Another apartment was occupied by the captain of the port, who told me that the mules engaged for me had got loose, and that the muleteers were looking for them. Here I had the pleasure to meet Dr. Drivon, a gentleman from the Island of St. Lucia, who had a large sugar hacienda a few leagues distant; he was at the port to superintend the disembarkation of machinery for a mill from the English brig. While waiting for the mules, he conducted me to a hut where he had two Guayaquil hammocks hung, and

feeling already the effect of my exertions, I took possession of one of them.

The woman of the rancho was a sort of ship's husband; there being three vessels in port, the rancho was encumbered with vegetables, fruit, eggs, fowls, and ship's stores. It was close and hot, but very soon I required all the covering I could get. I had a violent ague, followed by a fever, in comparison with which all I had suffered before was nothing. I called for water till the old woman was tired of giving it to me, and went out and left me alone. I became light-headed, wild with pain, and wandered among the miserable huts with only the consciousness that my brain was scorching. I have an indistinct recollection of speaking English to some Indian women, of begging them to get me a horse to ride to Sonsonate; of some laughing, others looking at me with pity, and others leading me out of the sun and making me lie down under the shade of a tree. At three o'clock in the afternoon the mate came ashore again. I had changed my position, and he found me lying on my face asleep and almost withered by the sun. He wanted to take me back on board the ship, but I begged him to procure mules and take me to Sonsonate, within the reach of medical assistance. It is hard to feel worse than I did when I mounted. I passed three hours of agony scorched by the intense heat, and a little before dark I arrived at Sonsonate, fortunate, as Dr. Drivon afterward told me, in not having suffered a stroke of the sun. Before entering the town and crossing the bridge over the Río Grande, I met a gentleman, well mounted with a scarlet Peruvian *pellón* over his saddle, with whose appearance I was struck, and we exchanged low bows. This gentleman, as I afterward learned, was the government I was looking for.

I rode to the house of Captain Le Nonvel's brother, one of the largest in the place, where I had that comfort seldom known in Central America, a room to myself and everything else necessary. For several days I remained within doors. The first afternoon I went out I called upon Don Manuel de Aguilar, formerly chief of the State of Costa

Rica, who had about a year before been driven out by a revolution and banished for life. At his house I met Don Diego Vigil, the vice-president of the Republic, the same gentleman whom I had met on the bridge and the only existing officer of the Federal government. From observation and experience in my own country, I had learned never to take the character of a public man from his political enemy; and I will not soil this page with the foul aspersions which men of veracity, blinded by party prejudice, threw upon the character of Señor Vigil. He was about forty-five, six feet high, thin, and suffering from a paralytic affection which almost deprived him of the use of both legs; in dress, conversation, and manners, he was eminently a gentleman. He had traveled more extensively in his own country than most of his countrymen, and knew all the objects of interest. With a politeness which I appreciated, he made no reference to my position or my official character.

His business at Sonsonate showed the wretched state of the country. He had come expressly to treat with Rascón, the head of the band which had prevented my coming from Guatemala by land. Chico Rascón, as he was familiarly called in Sonsonate, was of an old and respectable family; he had spent a large fortune in dissipation in Paris and, returning here in desperate circumstances, had turned patriot. About six months before, he had made a descent upon Sonsonate, killed the garrison to a man, robbed the customhouse, and retreated to his hacienda. He was then on a visit in the town, publicly, by appointment with Señor Vigil; he demanded, as the price of disbanding his troops, a colonel's commission for himself, other commissions for some of his followers, and four thousand dollars in money. Vigil assented to all except the four thousand dollars in money, offering instead the credit of the State of El Salvador, which Rascón agreed to accept. Papers were drawn up and that afternoon appointed for their execution; but, while Vigil was waiting for him, Rascón and his friends, without a word of notice, mounted their horses and rode out of town. The place was thrown into great excitement, and in the evening I saw the garrison

busily engaged in barricading the plaza in apprehension of another attack.

The next day I made a formal call upon Señor Vigil. I was in a rather awkward position. When I left Guatemala in search of a government, I did not expect to meet it on the road. In that state I had heard but one side; I was just beginning to hear the other. If there was any government, I had treed it. Was it the real thing or was it not? In Guatemala they said it was not; here they said it was. It was a knotty question. I was in no great favor in Guatemala, and in endeavoring to play a safe game I ran the risk of being hustled by all parties. In Guatemala they had no right to ask for my credentials, and took offence because I did not present them; here, if I refused, they had a right to consider it an insult. In this predicament I opened my business with the Vice-President and told him that I was on my way to the capital with credentials from the United States, but that, in the state of anarchy in which I found the country, I was at a loss what to do. I was desirous to avoid making a false step and anxious to know whether the Federal government really existed, or whether the Republic was dissolved.

Our interview was long and interesting, and the purport of his answer was that the government did exist *de facto* and *de jure*; that he himself had been legally elected vice-president; that the act of the four states in declaring themselves independent was unconstitutional and rebellious; that the union could not be dissolved except by a convention of deputies from all the states; that the government had the actual control in three states: one had been reduced to subjection by arms, and very soon the Federal Party would have the ascendancy in the others. He was familiar with the case of South Carolina, and he said that our Congress had sustained the right of the general government to coërcé states into subjection, and that they were in the same position here. I referred to the shattered condition of the government, to its absolute impotence in other states, and to the non-existence of senate and other co-ordinate branches, or even of a secretary of state, the officer to whom my credentials were addressed. He answered that he had in his suite an acting secre-

tary of state, confirming what had been told me before, and that the "government" would, at a moment's notice, make any officer I wanted. But I owe it to Señor Vigil to say that, after going over fully the whole ground of the unhappy contest, and although at that critical juncture the recognition of the Federal government by that of the United States would have been of moment to his party, and not to recognize it would have been disrespectful and would have favored the cause of the rebellious or independent states, he did not ask me to present my credentials. The Convention, which was expected to compose the difficulties of the Republic, was then about to assemble in Honduras. The deputies from El Salvador had gone to take their seats, and it was understood that I should await the decisions of this body. The result of my interview with the Vice-President was much more agreeable than I expected. I am sure that I left him without the least feeling of ill will on his part, but my great perplexity as to whether I had any government was not yet brought to a close.

In the meantime, while the political repairs were going on, I remained in Sonsonate recruiting. The town is situated on the banks of the Río Grande, which is formed by almost innumerable springs; in the Indian language its name means four hundred springs of water. It stands in one of the richest districts of the rich State of El Salvador, and has its plaza with streets at right angles and white houses of one story, some of them very large; but it has borne its share of the calamities which have visited the unfortunate Republic: The best houses are deserted, and their owners in exile. There are seven costly churches and but one cura.

I was unable to undertake any journey by land, and, feeling the enervating effect of the climate, swung all day in a hammock. Fortunately, the proprietors of the brig which I had seen at Acajutla bound for Peru, changed her destination and determined to send her to Costa Rica, the southernmost state of the Confederacy. At the same time, a man offered himself as a servant who was very highly recommended, and whose appearance I liked. I resolved to have the benefit of the sea voyage and, in returning by land, to

explore the canal route between the Atlantic and Pacific by the Lake of Nicaragua, a thing which I had desired much but which I had despaired of being able to accomplish.

Before leaving I roused myself for an excursion. The window of my room opened upon the volcano of Izalco. All day I heard at short intervals the eruptions of the burning mountain, and at night I saw the column of flame bursting from the crater and streams of fire rolling down its side. Fortunately, Mr. Blackwood, an Irish merchant for many years resident in Peru, arrived and agreed to accompany me.

The next morning before five o'clock we were in the saddle. At the distance of a mile we forded the Río Grande, here a wild river, and riding through a rich country, in half an hour we reached the Indian village of Naguisal, a lovely spot and literally a forest of fruits and flowers. Large trees were perfectly covered with red, and at every step we could pluck fruit. Interspersed among these beautiful trees were the miserable huts of Indians, and lying on the ground, or at some lazy work, were the miserable Indians themselves. Continuing another league through the same rich country, we rose upon a table of land, from which, looking back, we saw an immense plain, wooded and extending to the shore, and beyond it, the boundless waters of the Pacific. Before us, at the extreme end of a long street, was the church of Izalco, standing out in strong relief against the base of the volcano, which at that moment, with a loud report like the rolling of thunder, threw in the air a column of black smoke and ashes lighted by a single flash of flame.

With difficulty we obtained a guide, but he was so tipsy that he could scarcely guide himself along a straight street. He would not leave till the next day, as he said it was so late that we would be caught on the mountain at night and that it was full of tigers. In the meantime the daughter of our host found another guide, and, stowing four green cocoanuts in his alforjas, we set out. Soon we came out upon an open plain. Without a bush to obstruct the view, we saw on our left the whole volcano from its base to its top. It rose from near the foot of a mountain to a height perhaps of six thousand feet; its sides were brown and barren, and all around

for miles the earth was covered with lava. Being in a state of eruption, it was impossible to ascend it; behind it was a higher mountain, which commanded a view of the burning crater. The whole volcano was in full sight, spouting into the air a column of black smoke and an immense body of stones, while the earth shook under our feet. Crossing the plain, we commenced ascending the mountain.

At eleven o'clock we sat down by the bank of a beautiful stream to breakfast. My companion had made abundant provision and for the first time since I left Guatemala I felt the keenness of returning appetite. In half an hour we mounted, and soon after twelve o'clock entered the woods; we had a very steep ascent by a faint path which we soon lost altogether. Our guide changed his direction several times and at length, becoming lost, he tied his horse, and left us to wait while he searched the way. We knew that we were near the volcano, for the explosions sounded like the deep mutterings of dreadful thunder. Shut up as we were in the woods, these reports were awful. Our horses snorted with terror, and the mountain quaked beneath our feet. Our guide returned, and in a few minutes we came out suddenly upon an open point, higher than the top of the volcano, which commanded a view of the interior of the crater, and which was so near it that we saw the huge stones as they separated in the air and fell pattering around the sides of the volcano. In a few minutes our clothes were white with ashes, which fell around us with a noise like the sprinkling of rain.

The crater had three orifices: one was inactive; another emitted constantly a rich blue smoke; and, after a report, deep in the huge throat of the third there appeared a light blue vapor and then a mass of thick black smoke, whirling and struggling out in enormous wreaths and rising in a dark majestic column, lighted for a moment by a sheet of flame. When the smoke dispersed, the atmosphere was darkened by a shower of stones and ashes. This over, a moment of stillness followed, and then another report and eruption; these continued regularly, at intervals, as our guide said, of exactly five minutes, and really he was not much out of the way. The sight was fearfully grand. We refreshed ourselves



with a draught of cocoanut milk, thought how this grandeur would be heightened when the stillness and darkness of night were interrupted by the noise and flame, and forthwith resolved to sleep upon the mountain.

The cura of Sonsonate, still in the vigor of life, told me that he remembered when the ground on which this volcano stands had nothing to distinguish it from any other spot around. In 1798 a small orifice was discovered puffing out small quantities of dust and pebbles. He was then living at Izalco and, as a boy, was in the habit of going to look at it; he had watched it and marked its increase from year to year until it had grown into what it is now. Captain Le Nonvel told me he could observe from the sea that it had grown greatly within the last two years. Two years before, its light could not be seen at night on the other side of the mountain on which I stood. Night and day it forces up stones from the bowels of the earth, spouts them into the air, and receives them upon its sides. Every day it is increasing, and probably it will continue to do so until the inward fires die, or by some violent convulsion the whole is rent to atoms.

Old travelers are not precluded occasional bursts of enthusiasm, but they cannot keep it up long. In about an hour we began to be critical and even captious. Some eruptions were better than others, and some were comparatively small affairs. In this frame of mind we summed up our want of comforts for passing the night on the mountain and determined to return to the town. Mr. Blackwood and I thought that we could avoid the circuit of the mountain by descending directly to the base of the volcano, and by crossing it, reach the *camino real*; but our guide said it was a tempting of Providence and refused to accompany us. We had a very steep descent on foot, and in some places our horses slid down on their haunches. An immense bed of lava, stopped in its rolling course by the side of the mountain, filled up the wide space between us and the base of the volcano. We stepped directly upon this black and frightful bed, but we had great difficulty in making our horses follow. The lava lay in rolls as irregular as the waves of the sea, sharp, rough, and with huge chasms, difficult for us and

dangerous for the horses. With great labor we dragged them to the base and around the side of the volcano. Massive stones, hurled into the air, fell and rolled down the sides, so near that we dared not venture farther. Afraid of breaking our horses' legs in the holes into which they were constantly falling, we turned back. On the lofty point from which we had looked down into the crater of the volcano sat our guide, gazing, and, as we could imagine, laughing at us. We toiled back across the bed of lava and up the side of the mountain; when we reached the top both my horse and I were almost exhausted. Fortunately, the road home was down hill. It was long after dark when we passed the foot of the mountain and came out upon the plain. Every burst of the volcano sent forth a pillar of fire; in four places were steady fires and, in one, a stream of fire was rolling down its side. At eleven o'clock we reached Sonsonate. Besides toiling around the base of the volcano, we had ridden upward of fifty miles; but such had been the interest of the day's work, that, though my first effort, I never suffered from it.

The arrangements for my voyage down the Pacific were soon made. The servant to whom I referred was a native of Costa Rica, then on his way home after a long absence, with a cargo of merchandise belonging to himself. He was a tall, good-looking fellow, dressed in a Guatemala jacket, or *cotón*, a pair of Mexican leather trousers with buttons down the sides, and a steeple-crowned, broad-brimmed, drab wool hat; he was altogether far superior to any servant I saw in the country, and I think if it had not been for him I should not have undertaken the journey. The reader will perhaps be shocked to hear that his name was Jesús, pronounced in Spanish "Hezoos," by which latter appellation, to avoid what might be considered profanity, I shall hereafter call him.

## Chapter XVI

*Sickness and mutiny. Illness of Captain Jay. Critical situation. Rough nursing. A countryman in trouble. Dolphins. Succession of volcanoes. Gulf of Nicoya. Harbor of Caldera. Another countryman. Another patient. Hacienda of San Felipe. Mountain of Aguacate. Zillenthal Patent Self-acting Cold Amalgamation Machine. Gold mines. View from the mountain top.*

ON Monday, the twenty-second of January, two hours before daylight, we started for the port. Hezoos led the way, carrying before him all my luggage, rolled up in a *vaqueta*, which was simply a cowhide, after the fashion of the country. At daylight we heard behind us the clattering of horses' hoofs, and Don Manuel de Aguilar with his two sons overtook us. Before the freshness of the morning was past we reached the port and rode up to the old hut which I had hoped never to see again. The hammock was swinging in the same place. The miserable rancho seemed destined to be the abode of sickness. In one corner lay Señor de Iriarte, my captain, who, exhausted by a night of fever, was unable to sail that day.

Dr. Drivon was again at the port. He had not yet disembarked his machinery; in fact, the work was suspended by a mutiny on board the English brig, the ringleader of which, as the doctor complained to me, was an American. I passed the day on the seashore. In one place, a little above high-water mark and almost washed by the waves, were rude wooden crosses, marking the graves of unhappy sailors who had died far from their homes.

Returning to the hut, I found Captain Jay of the English brig, who also complained to me of the American sailor.

The captain was a young man, making his first voyage as master; his wife, whom he had married a week before sailing, accompanied him. He had had a disastrous voyage of eight months from London; in doubling Cape Horn his crew had been all frost-bitten and his spars carried away. With only one man on deck he had worked up to Guayaquil, where, after incurring great loss of time and money in making repairs, he shipped an entirely new crew. At Acajutla he found that his boats were not sufficient to land the doctor's machinery, and he was obliged to wait until a raft could be constructed. In the meantime his crew mutinied, and part of them refused to work. His wife was then at the doctor's hacienda and I noticed that, while writing her a note with pencil, his sunburned face was pale and large drops of perspiration stood on his forehead. Soon after he threw himself into the hammock and, as I thought, fell asleep; but in a few minutes I saw the hammock shake and, remembering my own shaking there, thought it was at its old tricks of giving people the fever and ague; but very soon I saw that the poor captain was in convulsions. Excepting Captain de Iriarte, who was lying against the wall perfectly helpless, I was the only man in the hut. As there was danger of Mr. Jay throwing himself out of the hammock, I endeavored to hold him in, but with one convulsive effort, he threw me to the other side of the hut and hung over the side of the hammock with one hand entangled in the cords and his head almost touching the ground. The old woman said that the devil had taken possession of him, and she ran out of doors screaming.

Fortunately, this brought in a man whom I had not seen before, a Mr. Warburton, an engineer who had come out to set up the machinery, and who was himself a machine of many horsepower, having a pair of shoulders that seemed constructed expressly for holding men in convulsions. At first he was so shocked that he did not know what to do. I told him that the captain was to be held, whereupon he opened his powerful arms and closed them around the captain's with the force of a hydraulic press, turning the legs over to me. These legs were a pair of the sturdiest that ever

supported a human body, and I verily believe that if the feet had once touched my ribs, they would have sent me through the wall of the hut. Watching my opportunity, I wound the hammock around his legs, and my arms around the hammock. In the meantime he broke loose from Mr. Warburton's hug. The latter, taking the hint from me, doubled his part in with the folds of the hammock and gave his clinch from the outside. The captain struggled and, worming like a gigantic snake, slipped his head out of the top of the hammock and twisted the cords around his neck, so that we were afraid of his strangling himself. We were in utter despair when in rushed two of his sailors, who, being at home with ropes, extricated his head, shoved him back into the hammock, and wrapped it around him as before. At this point I withdrew completely exhausted.

The two recruits were Tom, a regular tar of about forty, and the cook, a black man and a particular friend of Tom, who called him Darkey. Tom undertook the whole direction of securing the captain. Although Dr. Drivon and several Indians came in, Tom's voice was the only one which was heard, and it was addressed only to "Darkey." "Stand by his legs, Darkey!" "Hold fast, Darkey!" "Steady, Darkey!"—but all together could not hold him. Turning on his face and doubling himself inside, he braced his back and drove both legs through the hammock, striking his feet violently against the ground; his whole body passed through. His struggles were dreadful. Suddenly the mass of bodies on the floor rolled against Captain de Iriarte's bed, which broke down with a crash and, with a fever upon him, he was obliged to scramble out of the way. In the interval of one of the most violent struggles, we heard a strange idiotic noise, which seemed like an attempt to crow. When the Indians who crowded the hut laughed, Dr. Drivon was so indignant at their heartlessness that he seized a club and drove them all out of doors. An old naked African, who had been a slave at Belize and had lost his language without acquiring much of any other, returned with a bunch of feathers which he wished to stick in the captain's nose and

set fire to, saying it was the remedy of his country; but the doctor showed him his stick, and he retreated.

The convulsions continued for three hours, during which time the doctor considered the captain's situation to be very critical. The old woman persisted that the devil was in him and would not give him up, and that he must die; I could not but think of his young wife, who was sleeping a few miles off, unconscious of the calamity that threatened her. The fit was brought on, as the doctor said, by anxiety and distress of mind occasioned by his unfortunate voyage and particularly by the mutiny of his crew.

At eleven o'clock he fell asleep, and now we learned the cause of the strange noise which had affected us so unpleasantly. Tom had just been preparing to go on board the vessel when the African ran down to the shore and told him that the captain was at the hut drunk. Tom, being himself in that state, felt that it was his duty to look after the captain. He had just bought a parrot for which he had paid a dollar, and, afraid to trust him in other hands, he had hauled his baggy shirt a foot more out of his trousers and thrust the parrot into his bosom, almost smothering it with his neckcloth. The parrot, indignant at this confinement, was driving his beak constantly into Tom's breast, which was scarified and covered with blood; and once, when Tom thought it was going too far, he had put his hand inside and pinched it, thus producing the extraordinary sounds we had heard.

In a little while Tom and Darkey got the Indians to relieve them and went out to drink the captain's health. On their return they took their places on the ground, one on each side of their commander. I threw myself into the broken hammock and Dr. Drivon, charging them if the captain awoke not to say anything that could agitate him, went off to another hut.

It was not long before the captain, raising his head, called out, "What the devil are you doing with my legs?" which was answered by Tom's steady cry, "Hold on, Darkey!" Darkey and an Indian were holding the captain's legs, two Indians, his arms, and Tom was spread over his body. The

captain looked perfectly sensible and utterly amazed at being pinned to the ground. "Where am I?" said he. Tom and Darkey had agreed not to tell him what had happened; but, Tom, after the most extraordinary lying, while the captain was looking at him and us in utter amazement, became so entangled that, swearing the doctor might stay and tell his own stories, he began to tell how he and Darkey had come in and found the captain kicking in the hammock. The captain was given to understand that if it had not been for him and Darkey he would have kicked his own brains out. I relieved Tom's story from some obscurity, and a general and noisy conversation followed, which was cut short by poor Captain de Iriarte; he had not had a wink of sleep all night and begged us to give him a chance.

In the morning, while I was taking chocolate with Doctor Drivon, the mate came to the hut with the mutinous American sailor in the custody of four soldiers, to make a complaint to me. The sailor was a young man of twenty-eight, short, well made, and very good-looking, whose name was Jemmy. He, too, complained to me. He wanted to leave the brig, and said that he would stop on a barren rock in the midst of the ocean rather than remain on board. I told him I was sorry to find an American sailor a ringleader in mutiny, and I represented to him the distress and danger in which it had placed the captain. Doctor Drivon had had some sharp passages with him on board the brig and, after a few words, started up and struck him. Jemmy fell back in time to avoid the full blow; as if by no means unused to such things, he continued to fall back and ward off, but when pressed too hard, he broke loose from the soldiers and tore off his jacket for a regular fight.

I had no idea of favoring a mutinous sailor, but still less of suffering an American to be maltreated by odds, and I hauled off the soldiers. In a moment the doctor's passion was over and he discontinued his attack, whereupon Jemmy surrendered himself to the soldiers, who carried him, as I supposed, to the guardhouse. I waited a little while and, going down, saw Jemmy sitting on the ground in front of the

*cuartel*, or barracks, with both legs in the stocks above his knees. He was keenly alive to the disgrace of his situation, and my blood boiled. I hurried to the captain of the port and complained warmly of his conduct as high-handed and insufferable; I insisted that Jemmy must be released or I would ride to San Salvador on the instant and make a complaint against him. Doctor Drivon joined me and Jemmy was released from the stocks, but he was put under guard in the *cuartel*.

This will probably never reach the eyes of any of his friends, but I will not mention his name. He was from the little town of Esopus on the Hudson. In 1834 he had sailed from New York in the sloop-of-war *Peacock* for the Pacific station. Transferred to the *North Carolina* he had been regularly discharged at Valparaiso. He entered the Chilean naval service and, after plenty of fighting and no prize money, he had shipped on board this brig. I represented that he was liable to be tried for mutiny and had only escaped the stocks by my happening to be at the port, that I could do nothing more for him, and that he might be kept on shore till the vessel sailed and be carried on board in irons. It was a critical moment in the young man's life. I regarded him as one destitute of early opportunities and probably doomed by necessity to a wayward life. Still, as he was a countryman, I was anxious to save him from the effects of headstrong passion. The captain said he was the best sailor on board. As the captain was short of hands, I procured from him a promise that, if Jemmy would return to his duty, he would take no notice of what had passed and would give him his discharge at the first port where he could procure a substitute.

Fortunately, in the afternoon Captain de Iriarte was sufficiently recovered to sail, and before going on board my vessel I took Jemmy to his. She was the dirtiest vessel I ever saw, and her crew a fair sample of the villainous sailors picked up in ports of the Pacific. Among them and as bad as any in appearance, was another countryman, Jemmy's American accomplice. I did not wonder that Jemmy was discon-



tented; I left him on board in a bad condition, but, unfortunately, I afterward heard of him in a worse.

A few strokes of the oar brought me on board our vessel, and, as before, with the evening breeze we got under way. The vessel in which I embarked was called *La Cosmopolita*. She was a *goélette* brig and the only vessel that bore on the Pacific the Central American flag. She was built in England for a cutter and called the *Britannia*. By some accident she reached the Pacific Ocean and was bought by the State of El Salvador when at war with Guatemala and called by that state's Indian name of *Cuscatlán*. Afterward she was sold to an Englishman, who called her *Eugenia*, and from him she came to Captain de Iriarte, who called her *La Cosmopolita*.

My first night on board was not particularly agreeable. I was the only cabin passenger. Besides the bugs that always infest an old vessel, I had in my berth mosquitoes, spiders, ants, and cockroaches. Yet there is no part of my tour upon which I look back with so much quiet satisfaction as this voyage on the Pacific. I had on board *Gil Blas* and *Don Quixote* in the original, and all day I sat under an awning, my attention divided between them and the great range of gigantic volcanoes which stud the coast. Before this became tedious we reached the Gulf of Papagayo, the only outlet by which the winds of the Atlantic pass over to the Pacific. The dolphin, the most beautiful fish that swims, played under our bows and stern and accompanied us slowly alongside. But the sailors had no respect for his golden back. The mate, a murderous young Frenchman, stood for hours with a harpoon in his hand, driving it into several of these fish, and at length he brought one on board. The king of the sea seemed conscious of his fallen state; his beautiful colors faded, and he became spotted and at last heavy and lustreless like any other dead fish.

We passed in regular succession the volcanoes of San Salvador, San Vicente, San Miguel, Telica, Momotombo, Managua,<sup>1</sup> Nindirí, Masaya, and Nicaragua,<sup>1</sup> each one a noble spectacle. All together they formed a chain with which

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1. The editor has been unable to identify volcanoes with these two names.

no other in the world can be compared; indeed, this coast has well been described as "bristling with volcanic cones." For two days we lay with sails flapping in sight of Cape Blanco, the upper headland of the Gulf of Nicoya,<sup>2</sup> and on the afternoon of the thirty-first we entered the gulf. On a line with the point of the cape was an island of rock with high, bare, and precipitous sides, the top of which was covered with verdure. It was about sunset; for nearly an hour the sky and sea seemed blazing with the reflection of the departing luminary, and the island of rocks seemed like a fortress with turrets. It was a glorious farewell view. I had passed my last night on the Pacific, and the highlands of the Gulf of Nicoya closed around us.

Early in the morning we had the tide in our favor, and very soon, leaving the main body of the gulf, we turned off to the right and entered a beautiful little cove forming the harbor of Caldera. In front was the range of mountains of Aguacate, on the left the old port of Puntarenas, and on the right the volcano of San Pablo. On the shore was a long low house; it was set upon piles and had a tile roof. Near it were three or four thatched huts and two canoes. We anchored in front of the houses, apparently without exciting the attention of a soul on shore.

All the ports of Central America on the Pacific are unhealthy, but this one was considered deadly. I had entered without apprehension cities where the plague was raging, but here, as I looked ashore, there was a death-like stillness that was startling. To spare me the necessity of sleeping at the port, the captain sent the boat ashore with my servant to procure mules with which I could proceed immediately to a hacienda two leagues beyond.

Our boat had hardly started before we saw three men coming down to the shore, who presently put off in a canoe, met our boat, turned her back, and boarded us themselves. They were two paddles and a soldier. The soldier informed our captain that, by a late decree, no passenger would be permitted to land without the special permission of the gov-

2. The Gulf of Nicoya is in Costa Rica, the southernmost republic of Central America.

ernment, for which it was necessary to send an application to the capital and to wait on board for an answer. He added that the last vessel was full of passengers who were obliged to remain twelve days before the permission was received. I was used to vexations in traveling, but I could not bear this quietly. The captain made a bold attempt in my favor by saying that he had no passengers, but that he did have on board the Minister of the United States, who was making the tour of Central America, and who had been treated with courtesy in Guatemala and El Salvador, adding that it would be an indignity for the government of Costa Rica not to permit his landing.

He wrote to the same effect to the captain of the port, who, on the return of the soldier, came off himself. I was almost sick with vexation, and the captain of the port finished two glasses of wine before I had the courage to introduce the subject. He answered with great courtesy, regretting that the law was imperative and that he had no discretionary powers. I replied that the law was intended to prevent the entrance of seditious persons, emigrés, and *expulsados* from other states who might disturb the peace of Costa Rica, but that it could not contemplate a case like mine. In my discourse I laid great stress upon my official character. Fortunately for me, he had a high sense of the respect due to that character and, though holding a petty office, he had a feeling of pride that his state should not be considered wanting in courtesy to an accredited stranger. For a long time he was at a loss as to what to do; but finally, after much deliberation, he requested me to wait till morning, when he would dispatch a courier to advise the government of the circumstances and take upon himself the responsibility of permitting me to land. Fearful of some accident or some change of purpose and anxious to get my feet on shore, I suggested that in order to avoid traveling in the heat of the day it would be better to sleep on shore, so as to be ready for an early start. To this he assented.

In the afternoon the captain took me ashore. At the first house we saw two candles lighted to burn at the body of a dead man. All whom we saw were ill, and all complained that the place was fatal to human life: in fact, it was almost

deserted. Notwithstanding its advantages as a port, the government, a few days afterward, issued an order for breaking it up and moving back to the old port of Puntarenas. The captain was still suffering from fever and ague, and he would not on any account remain on shore after dark. I was so rejoiced to find myself on shore that if I had met a death's head at every step it would hardly have turned me back.

The last stranger who had been at the port was a distinguished American whose name was Handy. I had first heard of him at the Cape of Good Hope, hunting giraffes, and afterward I had met him in New York; I regretted exceedingly to miss him here. He had traveled from the United States through Texas, Mexico, and Central America with an elephant and two dromedaries as his file leaders! The elephant was the first ever seen in Central America, and I often heard of him in the *pueblos* under the name of *El Demonio*. Six days before, Mr. Handy, with his interesting family, had embarked for Peru, and perhaps he was at this moment crossing the pampas to Brazil.

Determined not to lose sight of my friend, the captain of the port, with my luggage at my heels I walked down the beach to the customhouse. It was a frame building about forty feet long, standing at a little distance above high-water mark on piles about six feet above ground. It was the gathering place of different persons in the employ of the government (civil and military) and of two or three women employed by them. The military force consisted of the captain of the port and the soldier who boarded us, so that I had not much fear of being sent back at the point of the bayonet. During the evening a new difficulty arose about my servant; but, considering myself tolerably secure, I insisted that he was my suite and obtained permission for him to accompany me. My host gave me a bedstead with a bull's hide for a bed. It was a warm night, and I placed it opposite an open door and looked out upon the water of the gulf. The waves were breaking gently upon the shore, and it was beautiful to see the *Cosmopolita* riding quietly at her anchor without even Hezoos or the luggage in her.

At two o'clock in the morning we rose, and before three we started. The tide was low, and for some distance we rode

along the shore by moonlight. At daylight we overtook the courier sent to give advice of my coming. An hour later we crossed the river of Jesús María, and at seven o'clock stopped to breakfast at the hacienda of the same name.

It was a miserable shell with an arbor of branches around it, but it had an appearance of cleanliness and comfort. Hezoos told me that the proprietor had two thousand head of cattle and owned all the land over which we had ridden from the sea. Hezoos was quite at home; as he afterward told me, he had once wanted to marry one of the daughters, but that the father and mother had objected because he was not good enough. He added that they were surprised at seeing him return in such prosperous circumstances and that the daughter told him she had always refused to marry any one else on account of her affection for him.

While I was breakfasting, the mother told me of a sick daughter, asked me for *remedios*, and finally requested me to go in and see her. The door opened from the shed, and all the apertures in the room were carefully closed so as to exclude even a breath of air. The invalid lay in a bed in one corner, which had a cotton covering over it like a mosquito-netting but lower and pinned close all around. When the mother raised the covering, I encountered a body of hot and unwholesome air that almost overcame me. The poor girl lay on her back with a cotton sheet wound tightly around her body, and already she seemed like one laid out for burial. She was not more than eighteen; the fever had just left her and her eye still sparkled, but her face was pale and covered with spots, seams, and creases of dirt. She was suffering from intermitting fever, that scourge which breaks down the constitution and carries to the grave thousands of the inhabitants of Central America.

According to the obstinate prejudice of the country, her face had not been washed for more than two months! I had often been disgusted with the long beards and unwashed faces of fever and ague subjects, and with the ignorance and prejudice of the people on medical subjects. An illustration of this ignorance was a case of practice by an old quack woman which Dr. Drivon told me about. She had directed

her patient, a rich cattle proprietor, to be extended on the ground naked every morning, and over him a bullock was to be slaughtered, so that the blood could run warm upon his body. The man submitted to the operation more than a hundred times and was bathed with the blood of more than a hundred bullocks; afterward he underwent a much more disgusting process, and, strange to say, he lived.

But to return to the case of the young girl. In general, my medical practice had been confined to men, and with them I considered myself a powerful practitioner. I did not like prescribing for women. In this case, I struck at all the prejudices of the country and cheapened my medical skill by directing first that the poor girl's face be washed, but I saved myself somewhat by making a strong point that it should be washed with warm water. Whether they thanked me or not I do not know, but I had my reward, for I saw a lovely face; long afterward I remembered the touching expression of her eyes as she turned toward me and listened to the advice I gave her mother.

At ten we resumed our journey. The land was level and rich but uncultivated. We passed several miserable cattle haciendas, the proprietors of which lived in the towns and kept men on the estate, from time to time, to gather and number the cattle, which roamed wild in the woods. At eleven we passed the hacienda of San Felipe, which belonged to a Welshman engaged in mining. It was in a large clearing and a fine situation, and its cleanliness, neatness, and good fences showed that the Welshman had not forgotten what he had learned at home.

Crossing the river Surubris and the Río Grande, or Machuca, we reached the hacienda of San Mateo, situated at the foot of the mountain of Aguacate, and from this place we began to ascend. The road had been much improved lately, but the ascent was steep, wild, and rugged. As we toiled up the ravine, we heard before us a loud noise that sounded like distant thunder, but regular and continued, and becoming louder as we advanced. At length, coming out on a small clearing, we saw on the side of the mountain a neat frame building of two stories with a light and graceful balcony in

front, alongside of which was the thundering machine which had startled us by its noise. Strangers from the other side of the Atlantic were piercing the sides of the mountain and pounding its stones into dust in a search for gold. The whole range, the very ground which our horses spurned with their hoofs, contained that treasure for which man forsakes kindred and country.

I rode up to the house and introduced myself to Don Juan Bardh, the superintendent, a German from Freiburg. It was about two o'clock and excessively hot. The house was furnished with chairs, sofa, and books, and it had in my eyes a delightful appearance; but the view without was even more delightful. The stream which turned the immense pounding machine had made the spot, from time immemorial, a *descansadero*, or resting place for muleteers. All around were mountains, and directly in front one rose to a great height, receding and covered to the top with trees.

Don Juan Bardh had been superintendent of the Quebrada del Ingenio for about three years. The company which he represented was called the Anglo Costa Rican Economical Mining Company. It had been in operation these three years without losing anything, which was considered doing so well that it had increased its capital and was about to continue on a larger scale. The machine, which had just been set up, was a new German patent, called a *Machine for Extracting Gold by the Zillenthal Patent Self-acting Cold Amalgamation Process* (I believe that I have omitted nothing). Its great value was that it required no preliminary process, but by one continued and simple operation it could extract the gold from the stone. It was an immense wheel of cast iron, by which the stone, as it came from the mountain, was pounded into powder. This powder passed into troughs filled with water and then into a reservoir containing vases, where the gold detached itself from the other particles and combined with the quicksilver with which the vases were provided.

There were several mines under Don Juan's charge, and after dinner he accompanied me to that of Corralillo, which was the largest and, fortunately, lay on my road. After a

hot ride of half an hour, ascending through thick woods, we reached the spot.

According to the opinion of the few geologists who have visited that part of the country, immense wealth lies buried in the mountain of Aguacate; and so far from being hidden, the proprietors say, its places are so well marked that all who search may find. The lodes or mineral veins run regularly north and south in ranges of greenstone porphyry with strata of basaltic porphyry, and they average about three feet in width. In some places side-cuts or lateral excavations are made from east to west, and in others shafts are sunk until they strike the vein.

The first opening we visited was a side-cut four feet wide, which penetrated two hundred and forty feet before it struck the lode, but it was so full of water that we did not enter. Above it was another cut, and higher still a shaft was sunk. We descended the shaft by a ladder made of the trunk of a tree, with notches cut in it, until we reached the vein, which we followed with a candle as far as it was worked. It was about a yard wide, and the sides glittered—but not with gold; it was quartz and feldspar, impregnated with sulphuret of iron and gold in such small particles as to be invisible to the naked eye. The most prominent objects in these repositories of wealth were naked workmen with pickaxes, bending and sweating under heavy sacks of stones.

It was late in the afternoon when I came out of the shaft. Don Juan conducted me by a steep path up the side of the mountain to a small table of land, on which was a large building occupied by miners. The view was magnificent: below was an immense ravine; above, perched on a point like an eagle's nest, the house of another superintendent; and on the opposite side the great range of the mountains of Candelaria. I waited till my mules came up and then, with many thanks for his kindness, I bade Don Juan farewell.

As we continued ascending, every moment the view became more grand and beautiful; suddenly, from a height of six thousand feet, I looked down upon the Pacific, the Gulf of Nicoya, and, sitting like a bird upon the water, our brig,



*La Cosmopolita*. And here, on the very highest points, in the wildest and most beautiful spots that ever men chose for their abodes, were the huts of the miners. The sun touched the sea, lighting up the surface of the water and softening the rugged mountains. It was the most beautiful scene I ever saw, and this liveliest view was the last that day, for suddenly it became dark, and very soon the darkest night I ever knew came on.

As we descended, the woods were so thick that even in the daytime they shut out the light, and in some places the road was cut through steep hills higher than our heads and roofed over by the dense foliage. Hezoos was before me, with a white hat and jacket and with a white dog running by his side, but I could not see the outline of his figure. The road was steep but good, and I did not pretend to direct the mule. In one of the darkest passages Hezoos stopped and, with a voice that made the woods ring, cried out "a lion! a lion!" I was startled, but he dismounted and lighted a cigar. This was cool, I thought, but he relieved me by telling me that here a lion was a different animal from the roarer of the African desert, that it was small, frightened by a shout, and only ate children.

Long as it seemed, our whole descent did not occupy three hours, and at ten o'clock we reached the house at the foot of the mountain. It was shut, and all were asleep; but when we knocked hard, a man opened the door and, before we could ask any questions, disappeared. Once inside, however, we made noise enough to wake everybody and got corn for the mules and a light. There was a large room open to all comers, with three bedsteads, all occupied; in addition two men were sleeping on the floor. The occupant of one of the beds, after eying me a few moments, vacated it, and I took his place. The reader must not suppose that I am perfectly unscrupulous; he took all his bedclothes, that is, his *chamarra*, with him. The bed and all its furniture consisted of an untanned bull's hide.

## Chapter XVII

*La Garita. Alajuela. A friendly people. Heredia. Río Segundo. Coffee plantations of San José. The sacrament for the dying. A happy meeting. Traveling embarrassments. Quarters in a convent. Señor Carrillo, Chief of State. Vicissitudes of fortune. Visit to Cartago. Tres Ríos. An unexpected meeting. Ascent of the volcano of Cartago. The crater. View of the two seas. Descent. Stroll through Cartago. A burial. Another attack of fever and ague. A vagabond. Cultivation of coffee.*

THE next morning we entered an open, rolling, and undulating country which reminded me of scenes at home. At nine o'clock we came to the brink of a magnificent ravine, and, as we wound down by a steep descent of more than fifteen hundred feet, the mountains closed around us forming an amphitheatre. At the bottom of the ravine was a rough wooden bridge crossing a narrow stream running between perpendicular rocks a hundred and fifty feet high; it was very picturesque and reminded me of Trenton Falls.

We ascended by a steep road to the top of the ravine, where a long house stood across the road, which prevented all passing except directly through it. It was called La Garita<sup>1</sup> and commanded the road from the port to the capital. Officers were stationed here to take an account of merchandise and to examine passports. The officer then in command had lost an arm in the service of his country, that is, in a battle between his own town and another fifteen miles off; his place here had been given to him as a reward for his patriotic services.

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1. La Garita, or "sentry box," is now the name of a village at this point on the main road to San José.

As we advanced the country improved, and for a league before entering Alajuela it was lined on both sides with houses three or four hundred yards apart, built of sun-dried bricks and whitewashed. The fronts of some of the houses were ornamented with paintings, and several had chalked in red on each side of the door the figure of a soldier with his musket shouldered and bayonet fixed, large as life and stiff as a martinet. But all imperfections were hidden by rows of trees on both sides of the road, many of them bearing beautiful flowers, which in some places completely imbowered the houses. The fields were cultivated with sugar cane, and every house had its little *trapiche*, or sugar mill. There were marks of carriage wheels and very soon we heard a vehicle approaching. The creaking of its wheels made almost as much noise as the Zillenthal Patent Cold Amalgamating Machine in the mountain of Aguacate. They were made of a cut, about ten or twelve inches thick, from the trunk of a guanacaste tree, with a hole in the center which played upon the axle almost *ad libitum*, making the most mournful noise that can be conceived. The body was constructed of sugar cane; it was about four feet high, and drawn by oxen fastened by the horns instead of by the neck.

At the entry of Alajuela I stopped to inquire for one who bore a name immortal in the history of the Spanish conquest. It was the name of Alvarado. Whether this man was a descendant or not I do not know, nor did he; and strange to say, though I met several bearing that name, not one attempted to trace his lineage to the conqueror. Don Ramón Alvarado, however, was recommended to me for qualities which allied him in character with his great namesake. He was the courier of the English Mining Company for Sarapiquí and the River San Juan,<sup>2</sup> one of the wildest roads in all Central America.

Next to the advantage of the sea voyage, my principal object in leaving Sonsonate had been to acquire some information in regard to the canal route between the Atlantic and

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2. The San Juan river marks the frontier between Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

Pacific by means of the Lake of Nicaragua and the River San Juan, and my business with Alvarado was to secure him as a guide to the port of San Juan.<sup>3</sup> In half an hour all these arrangements were made, and the day fixed and half the contract money paid. In the meantime Hezoos was busily engaged in drawing a black glazed covering over my hat and fixing in it an American eagle which I had taken off on ship-board.

There are four cities in Costa Rica, all of which lie within the space of fifteen leagues; yet each has a different climate and different productions. Including the suburbs, Alajuela contains a population of about ten thousand. The plaza was beautifully situated, and the church, the cabildo, and the houses fronting it were handsome. The latter were long and low, with broad piazzas and large windows, and balconies made of wooden bars. It was Sunday, and the inhabitants, cleanly dressed, were sitting on the piazzas, or, with doors wide open, reclining in hammocks or on high-backed wooden settees inside. The women were dressed like ladies, and some were handsome, and all were white. A respectable-looking old man, standing in the door of one of the best houses, called out *amigo* (friend), and asked us who we were, whence we came, and whither we were going, recommending us to God at parting. All along the street we were accosted in the same friendly spirit.

At a distance of three leagues we passed through Heredia without dismounting. I had ridden all day with a feeling of extraordinary satisfaction; and if such were my feelings, what must have been those of Hezoos? He was returning to his country, with his love for it increased by absence and hardship away from home. All the way he met old acquaintances and friends. He was a good-looking fellow, dashingy dressed, and wore a basket-hilted Peruvian sword more than six feet long. Behind him was strapped a valise of scarlet cloth with black borders, part of the uniform of a Peruvian soldier. It would have been curious to remember how many

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3. There are two ports in Nicaragua by this name. It is safe to assume that Stephens is referring here to San Juan del Sur on the Pacific coast.

times he told his story: of military service and two battles in Peru, of impressment for the navy and desertion, of a voyage to Mexico and his return to Guatemala by land. He always concluded by inquiring about his wife, from whom he had not heard since he left home, *la pobre* being regularly his last words. As we approached his home his tenderness for *la pobre* increased. He could not procure any direct intelligence of her, but one good-natured friend suggested that she had probably married someone else, and that he would only disturb the peace of the family by his return.

A league beyond Heredia we came to another great ravine. We descended and crossed a bridge over the Río Segundo. A few months before, this river had risen suddenly and, without any apparent cause, swept away a house and family near the bridge, carrying with it consternation and death. Little is known of the geography of the interior of the country, but it is supposed that a lake had burst its bounds. As we were coming out of the ravine, Hezoos pointed out the scene of the battle in which the officer of La Garita had lost his arm, and in which he himself had taken part. Being a San José man, he spoke of the people of the other town as an Englishman in Lord Nelson's time would have spoken of a Frenchman.

On the top of the ravine we came upon a large table of land covered with the rich coffee plantations of San José. It was laid out into squares of two hundred feet and enclosed by living fences of trees bearing flowers; its roads were sixty feet wide and, except the small horsepath, had a sod of unbroken green. The deep green of the coffee plantations, the sward of the roads, and the vistas through the trees at all the crossroads were lovely. At a distance on each side were mountains, and in front, rising above all, was the great volcano of Cartago. It was about the same hour as when, the day before, from the top of the mountain of Aguacate, I had looked down into great ravines and over the tops of high mountains and seen the Pacific Ocean. This scene was as soft as that had been wild; and it addressed itself to other senses than the sight, for it was not, like the rest of Central America, retrograding and going to ruin, it was smiling as the re-

ward of industry. Seven years before the whole plain had been an open waste.

At the end of this table of land we saw San José on a plain below us. On the top of the hill we passed a house with an arch of flowers before the door, which indicated that within there lay one who was waiting to receive the last sacrament before going to his final account in another world. Descending, we saw at a distance a long procession headed by a cross with the figure of the Saviour crucified. It approached with the music of violins and a loud chorus of voices, escorting the priest, who was carried in a sedan chair, to the house of the dying man. As it approached, horsemen pulled off their hats and pedestrians fell on their knees. We met it near a narrow bridge at the foot of the hill and waited till the priest passed. Then, taking advantage of a break in the procession, we crossed the bridge and passed a long file of men and a longer one of women. The sun was low, but its last rays were scorching to the naked head and, being some distance ahead, I put on my hat. A fanatic fellow, with a scowl on his face, cried out, "*quítese su sombrero* (take off your hat)." I answered by spurring my horse, and at the same moment the whole procession was thrown into confusion. A woman darted from the line, and Hezoos sprang from his horse and caught her in his arms and hugged and kissed her as much as decency in the public streets would allow. To my great surprise, the woman was only his cousin, but she told him that his wife, who was the principal milliner in the place, was up ahead in the procession. Hezoos was beside himself; he ran back, returned, caught his horse, and dragged the beast after him; then mounting and spurring, he begged me to hurry on and let him go back to his wife.

Entering the town, we passed a respectable-looking house, where four or five well-dressed women were sitting on the piazza. They screamed and Hezoos drove his mule up the steps and, throwing himself off, embraced them all around. After a few hurried words, he embraced them all over again. Some male friends attempted to haul him off, but he returned to the women. In fact, the poor fellow seemed beside himself, though I could not but observe that there was

method in his madness, for after two rounds with the very respectable old ladies he abandoned them, and dragging forward a very pretty young girl, with his arms around her waist and kissing her every moment, he told me she was the apprentice of his wife. Though at every kiss he asked her questions about his wife, he did not wait for answers, and the kisses were repeated faster than the questions.

During all this time I sat on my horse looking on. Doubtless it was all very pleasant for him, but I began to be impatient. Seeing this, he tore himself away, mounted, and accompanied by half a dozen of his friends, he again led the way. As we advanced, his friends increased. It was rather vexatious, but I could not disturb him in the sweetest pleasures in life, the welcome of friends after a long absence. As we were crossing the plaza, two or three soldiers of his old company, leaning on the railing of the cuartel, cried out *compañero*, and, with the sergeant at their head, they passed over and joined us. We crossed the plaza with fifteen or twenty in our suite—or rather in his suite—some of whom, particularly the sergeant, in compliment to him, were civil to me.

While he had so many friends to welcome him, I had none. In fact, I did not know where I should sleep that night. In the large towns of Central America I was always at a loss where to stop. Throughout the country the traveler finds no public accommodation save the *cabildo* and a jar of water. Everything else he must carry with him or purchase on the spot—if he can. But in the large towns he has not even this resource, for it is not considered respectable to stop at the *cabildo*. I had letters of recommendation, but it was excessively disagreeable to present one from the back of a mule with my luggage at my heels, as it was, in fact, a draft at sight for board and lodging.

Hezoos had told me that there was an old *chapelón*, that is, a person from Spain, in whose house I could have a room to myself and pay for it; but, unfortunately, time had made its changes, and the old Spaniard had been gone so long that the occupants of his house did not know what had become of him. I had counted upon him with so much certainty that I

had not taken out my letters of recommendation and did not even know the names of the persons to whom they were addressed. The cura was at his hacienda, and his house shut up; and a padre who had been in the United States was sick and could not receive anyone. My servant's friends all recommended different persons, as if I had the whole town at my disposal; and principally they urged me to honor with my company the chief of the state. In the midst of this street consultation, I longed for a hotel at a hundred dollars a day, with the government as paymaster.

Hezoos, who was all the time in a terrible hurry, after an animated interlude with some of his friends, spurred his mule and hurried me back. He crossed a corner of the plaza and turned down a street to the right, stopping opposite a small house where he dismounted and begged me to do the same. In a moment the saddles were whipped off and carried inside. I was ushered into the house and seated on a low chair in a small room where a dozen women, friends of Hezoos and his wife, were waiting to welcome him to his home. He told me that he had not known where his house was, or that it had an extra room, till he learned it from his friends. Carrying my luggage into a little dark apartment, he said that I could have that to myself, and that he and his wife and all his friends would wait upon me, and that I could be more comfortable there than in any house in San José.

I was excessively tired, having made three days' journey in two, and I was worn out with the worry of searching for a resting place. If I had been younger and had no character to lose, I should not have given myself any further trouble; but, unfortunately, the dignity of office might have been touched by my remaining in the house of my servant. Besides, I could not move without running against a woman and, more than all, Hezoos threw his arms around any one of them he chose and kissed her as much as he pleased. In the midst of my irresolution *la pobre* herself arrived, and half the women in the procession, amateurs of tender scenes, followed. I shall not attempt to describe the meeting. Hezoos, as in duty bound, forsook all the rest and, notwith-



standing all that he had done, wrapped her little figure in his arms as tightly as if he had not looked at a woman for a month; and *la pobre* lay in his arms as happy as if there were no pretty cousins or apprentices in the world.

All this was too much for me. I worked my way out of doors and, after a consultation with the sergeant, I ordered my horse to be saddled. Riding a third time across the plaza, I stopped before the convent of Don Antonio Castro. The woman who opened the door said that the padre was not at home; I answered that I would walk in and wait, and ordered my luggage to be set down on the portico. She invited me inside, and I ordered the luggage in after me. The room occupied nearly the whole front of the convent, and, besides some pictures of saints, its only furniture was a large wooden table and a long, high-backed, wooden-bottomed settee. I laid my pistols and spurs upon the table and, stretching myself upon the settee, waited to welcome the padre to his house.

It was some time after dark when he returned. He was surprised and evidently did not know what to do with me, but he seemed to recognize the principle that possession is nine points of the law. I saw, however, that his embarrassment was not from want of hospitality, but from a belief that he could not make me comfortable. In Costa Rica the padres are poor, and I afterward learned that there it is unusual for a stranger to plant himself upon one. I have since thought that Padre Castro must have considered me particularly cool; but, at all events, when his nephew came in soon after, they forthwith procured me chocolate. At each end of the long room was a small one, one occupied by the padre and the other by his nephew. The latter vacated his and, with a few pieces from the padre's room, they fitted me up so well that when I lay down I congratulated myself upon my forcible entry; probably before they had recovered from their surprise, I was asleep.

My arrival was soon known, and the next morning I received several invitations to the house of residents—one was from the lady of Don Manuel de Aguilar; but I was so well pleased with the convent that I was not disposed to leave it.

As a matter of course, I soon became known to all the foreign residents, who, however, were but four: Messrs. Steipel and Squire, a German and an Englishman associated in business; Mr. Wallenstein, German; and a countryman, Mr. Lawrence, from Middletown, Connecticut. All four lived with Mr. Steipel, and I had immediately a general invitation to make his house my home.

San José is, I believe, the only city that has grown up or even improved since the independence of Central America. Under the Spanish dominion Cartago was the royal capital; but, on the breaking out of the revolution, the fervor of patriotism was so hot that it was resolved to abolish this memorial of colonial servitude and to establish the capital at San José. Their local advantages are perhaps equal. Cartago is nearer the Atlantic, and San José the Pacific, but they are only six leagues apart. The buildings in San José are all republican: not one is of any grandeur or architectural beauty, and the churches are inferior to many erected by the Spaniards in the smallest villages. Nevertheless, it exhibited a development of resources and an appearance of business unusual in this lethargic country. There was one house in the plaza which showed that the owner had been abroad and had returned with his mind so liberalized as to adopt the improvements of other countries and build differently from the custom of his fathers and the taste of his neighbors.

My first visit of ceremony was to Señor Carrillo, the *Jefe del Estado*. The State of Costa Rica enjoyed at that time a degree of prosperity unequalled by any in the disjointed confederacy. At a safe distance, without wealth enough to excite cupidity, and with a large tract of wilderness to protect it against the march of an invading army, it had escaped the tumults and wars which desolated and devastated the other states. And yet, but two years before, it had had its own revolution: a tumultuous soldiery had entered the plaza shouting *abajo Aguilar, viva Carrillo*. My friend Don Manuel had been driven out by bayonets and banished from the state; Carrillo was installed in his place, and he appointed his father-in-law, a quiet, respectable old

man, vice-chief. He called the soldiery, officers, civil and military, into the plaza, and all went through the solemn farce of swearing fealty to the Constitution. The time fixed by the Constitution for holding new elections came, but they were not permitted to be held. Having tried this once and having failed, Carrillo did not mean to run the risk of holding another; probably he will hold on till he is turned out by the same force that put him in. In the meantime, he uses prudent precautions: he does not permit emigrés, nor revolutionists, nor suspected persons from other states to enter his dominions; he has sealed up the press; and he imprisons, or banishes under pain of death if they return, all who speak aloud against the government.

He was about fifty, short, stout, and plain but careful in his dress, with an appearance of dogged resolution in his face. His house was republican enough, and had nothing to distinguish it from that of any other citizen; in one part his wife had a little store, and in the other was his office for government business. His office was not larger than the counting room of a third-rate merchant; he had three clerks who, at the moment of my entering, were engaged in writing, while he, with his coat off, was looking over papers. He had heard of my coming and welcomed me to Costa Rica. Though the law under which I had come near being detained at the port was uppermost in my mind, and I am sure was not forgotten by him, neither of us referred to it. He inquired particularly about Guatemala; though sympathizing in the policy of that state, he had no good opinion of Carrera. He was uncompromising in his hostility to General Morazán and the Federal government. In fact, it seemed to me that he was against any general government and strongly impressed with the idea that Costa Rica could stand alone; doubtless he believed that the state, or he, himself, which is the same thing, could disburse revenues better than any other authority. Indeed, this is the rock on which all the politicians of Central America split; there is no such thing as national feeling. Every state would be an empire; the officers of state cannot brook superiors; a chief of state cannot brook a president. He had not sent deputies to the Conven-

tion and did not intend to do so, but he said that Costa Rica would remain neutral until the other states had settled their difficulties.

He spoke with much interest of the improvement of the roads, particularly to the ports on the Atlantic and Pacific, and expressed great satisfaction at the project of the British government, which I mentioned to him, of sending steamboats to connect the West India Islands with the American coast, which, by touching at the port of San Juan, could bring his secluded capital to within eighteen or twenty days of New York. In fact, usurper and despot as he is, Carrillo works hard for the good of the state, and for twelve hundred dollars a year, with perquisites and leave to be his own paymaster. In the meantime, all who do not interfere with him are protected. A few who cannot submit to despotism talk of leaving the country, but the great mass are contented, and the state prospers. As for myself, I admire him. In that country the alternative is a strong government or none at all. Throughout his state I felt a sense of personal security which I did not enjoy in any other. For the benefit of travelers, may he live a thousand years!

In the afternoon I dined with the foreign residents at the house of Mr. Steipel. This gentleman is an instance of the vicissitudes of fortune. A native of Hanover, at fifteen he left college and entered the Prussian army. He fought at Dresden and Leipzig, and at the battle of Waterloo he received a ball in his brain, which, unfortunately, only within the month preceding, caused him to lose the use of one eye. Disabled for three years by his wound, on his recovery, with three companions he had sailed for South America, where he had entered the Peruvian army, married an *Hija del Sol* (Daughter of the Sun) and turned merchant. Later he came to San José, where he was then living in a style of European hospitality. I shall lose all reputation as a sentimental traveler, but I cannot help mentioning honorably every man who gave me a good dinner; and with this determination, I shall offend the reader but once more.

Early the next morning, accompanied by my countryman, Mr. Lawrence, and mounted on a noble mule lent me by

Mr. Steipel, I set off for Cartago. We left the city by a long, well-paved street, and a little beyond the suburbs passed a neat coffee plantation, which reminded me of a Continental villa. It was the property of a Frenchman, who had died just as he completed it; but his widow had provided another master for his house and father for his children. On both sides were mountains, and in front was the great volcano of Cartago. The fields were cultivated with corn, plantains, and potatoes. The latter, though indigenous, and now scattered all over Europe, is no longer the food of the natives and is but rarely found in Spanish America. The Cartago potatoes are of good flavor, but not larger than a hickory nut, doubtless from the want of care in cultivating them. We passed a campo santo, a square enclosure of mud walls whitewashed, and came to an Indian village, the first I had seen in Costa Rica. It was much better than any in the other states, the houses of *tejas*, or tiles, were more substantial, and the inhabitants had clothes on.

Halfway between San José and Cartago we reached the village of Tres Ríos. From this place the road was more broken, without fences, and the land but little cultivated.

Entries have been found in the records of Cartago dated in 1598,<sup>4</sup> which show it to be the oldest city in Central America. Coming as we did from San José, its appearance was that of an ancient city. The churches were large and imposing, the houses had yard walls as high as themselves, and the quiet was extraordinary. We rode up a very long street without seeing a single person; the cross streets, extending to a great distance in both directions, were desolate. A single horseman crossing at some distance was an object to fix our attention.

The day before we had met at San José Dr. Bridley, the only foreign resident in Cartago, who had promised to procure a guide and make arrangements for us to ascend the volcano of Cartago; <sup>5</sup> we found that, besides doing all that he had promised, he was himself prepared to go with us. While

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4. Cartago was founded in 1522.

5. Now known as the "Volcán Irazú."

dinner was being prepared, Mr. Lawrence and I visited another countryman, Mr. Lovel, a gentleman whom I had known in New York. He had brought with him from New York a newly married wife, a young lady who, to my surprise and great pleasure, I recognized as an acquaintance—a very slight acquaintance, it is true, but the merest personal knowledge, so far from home, was almost enough to constitute an intimacy. She had encountered many hardships, and her home was indeed in a strange land; but she bore all with the spirit of a woman who had given up all for one and was content with the exchange. Their house, situated on one side of the plaza, commanded a view of the volcano almost from its base to its top; though one of the best houses in the place, the rent was only six dollars per month.

Immediately after dinner we set out to ascend the volcano. It was necessary to sleep en route, and Mr. Lovel furnished me with a poncho from Mexico for a covering and a bear's skin from the Rocky Mountains for a bed. Passing down the principal street, we crossed in front of the cathedral and immediately began to ascend. Very soon we reached a height which commanded a view of a river, a village, and an extensive valley not visible from the plain below. The sides of the volcano are particularly favorable for cattle and, although the plains below were unappropriated, all the way up were *potreros*, or pasture grounds, and huts occupied by persons who had charge of the cattle.

Our only anxiety was lest we should lose our way. A few months before my companions had attempted to ascend with Mr. Handy, but, by the ignorance of their guide, they had become lost; after wandering the whole night on the sides of the volcano, they had returned without reaching the top. As we ascended, the temperature became colder, and I put on my poncho, but before we reached our stopping place my teeth were chattering, and before dismounting I had an ague. The situation was most wild and romantic, hanging on the side of an immense ravine, but I would have exchanged all its beauties for a blazing coal fire. The hut, built of mud, was the highest on the mountain; there was no opening but the door and there were cracks in the wall. Opposite the door

was a figure of the Virgin, and on each side was a frame for a bed; my friends spread the bear's skin on one of the frames, and tumbling me upon it, wrapped me up in the poncho. I had promised myself a social evening, but who can be sure of an hour of pleasure? I was entirely unfit for use, but the place was perfectly quiet and my friends made me some hot tea; upon the whole, I had as comfortable a chill and fever as I had ever experienced.

Before daylight we resumed our journey. The road was rough and precipitous; in one place where a tornado had swept the mountain and the trees lay across the road so thickly as to make it almost impassable, we were obliged to dismount and climb over some and creep under others. Beyond this we came into an open region, where nothing but cedar and thorns grew; and here I saw whortleberries for the first time in Central America. In that wild region there was a charm in seeing anything that was familiar to me at home, and I should perhaps have become sentimental, but they were hard and tasteless. As we rose we entered a region of clouds which very soon became so thick that we could see nothing; the figures of our own party were barely distinguishable, and we lost all hope of any view from the top of the volcano. Grass still grew here, and we ascended till we reached a belt of barren sand and lava where to our great joy we emerged from the region of clouds and saw the top of the volcano, without a vapor upon it, seeming to mingle with the clear blue sky; at that early hour the sun was not high enough to play upon its top.

Mr. Lawrence, who had exerted himself in walking, lay down to rest, and the doctor and I walked on. The crater was about two miles in circumference, rent and broken by time or some great convulsion; the fragments stood high, bare, and grand as mountains, and within were three or four smaller craters. We ascended on the south side by a ridge running east and west till we reached a high point, at which there was an immense gap in the crater impossible to cross. The lofty point on which we stood was perfectly clear, the atmosphere was of transparent purity, and, looking beyond the region of desolation, below us at a distance of perhaps

two thousand feet the whole country was covered with clouds and the city at the foot of the volcano invisible.

By degrees the more distant clouds were lifted, and over the immense bed we saw at the same moment the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This was the grand spectacle we had hoped, but scarcely expected, to behold. My companions had ascended the volcano several times, but on account of the clouds had only seen the two seas once before. The points at which they were visible were at the Gulf of Nicoya and the harbor of San Juan, which were not directly opposite but nearly at right angles to each other, so that we could see both oceans without turning the body. In a right line over the tops of the mountains neither ocean was more than twenty miles distant, and from the great height at which we stood they seemed almost at our feet. This is the only point in the world which commands a view of the two seas; and I ranked the sight with those most interesting occasions when, from the top of Mount Sinai, I looked out upon the Desert of Arabia, and when, from Mount Hor, I saw the Dead Sea.<sup>6</sup>

There is no history or tradition of the eruption of this volcano; probably it took place long before the country was discovered by Europeans. This was one of the occasions in which I regretted the loss of my barometer, as the height of the mountain had never been measured; it is believed to be about eleven thousand feet.

We returned to our horses and found Mr. Lawrence and the guide asleep. We woke them, kindled a fire, made chocolate, and descended. In an hour we reached the hut at which we had slept, and at two o'clock, Cartago.

Toward evening I set out with Mr. Lovel for a stroll. The streets were all alike, long and straight, and there was nobody in them. We fell into one which seemed to have no end, and at some distance were intercepted by a procession coming down a cross street. It was headed by boys playing on violins. A small barrow tastefully decorated and strewed

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6. Stephens notes that "several persons who have crossed the Isthmus from Chagres to Panama" report "that there is no point on the road from which the two seas are visible."



with flowers followed; it was a bier carrying the body of a child to the cemetery. We followed the procession and, passing it at the gate, entered the cemetery through a chapel, at the door of which sat three or four men selling lottery tickets, one of whom asked us if we wished to see the grave of our countryman. When we assented, he conducted us to the grave of a young American whom I had known by sight, and several members of whose family I knew personally. He had died about a year before my visit, and his funeral was attended with mournful circumstances. The vicar had refused him burial in consecrated ground, but Dr. Bridley, the only European resident in Cartago, at whose house he died, had ridden over to San José and, making a strong point of the treaty existing between the United States and Central America, had obtained an order from the government for his burial in the cemetery. Still the fanatic vicar, acting, as he said, under a higher power, refused. A messenger had then been sent to San José, and two companies of soldiers were ordered to the doctor's house to escort the body to the grave. That night men had been stationed by the grave to watch that the body was not dug up and thrown out. The next day the vicar, with the cross and images of saints and all the emblems of the church, and a large concourse of citizens, moved in solemn procession to the cemetery and formally reconsecrated the ground which had been polluted by the burial of a heretic.

In an honored place among the principal dead of Cartago, lay the body of another stranger, an Englishman named Baillie. The day before his death the alcalde had been called in to draw his will. When, according to the customary form, the alcalde asked him if he was a Christian, Mr. Baillie answered yes, and the alcalde recorded him as *Católico Romano Apostólico Cristiano*. Mr. Baillie, having known of the difficulty in the case of my countryman about six months before and wishing to spare his friends a disagreeable and, perhaps, unsuccessful controversy, had already indicated a particular tree under which he wished to be buried. He did not see what the alcalde recorded, and before the will was read to him, he died. His recorded answer to

the alcalde had been considered evidence of his orthodoxy and, his friends not wishing to interfere, he had been buried under the special direction of the priests, with all the holiest ceremonies of the Church. It had been the greatest day ever known in Cartago. The funeral had been attended by all the citizens. The procession had started from the door of the church, headed by violins and drums; priests followed with all the crosses, figures of saints, and banners that had been accumulating from the foundation of the city. At the corners of the plaza and of all the principal streets, the procession stopped to sing hallelujahs to represent the joy in heaven over a sinner that repents.

From where we were standing we saw the man who had accompanied the bier in this day's procession pass by with the child in his arms. He was its father, and with a smile on his face he was carrying it to its grave. He was followed by two boys playing on violins, while others were laughing around. As the child, dressed in white with a wreath of roses around its head, lay in its father's arms, it did not seem dead, but sleeping. The grave not being quite ready, the boys sat on the heap of dirt thrown out and played the violin till it was finished. The father then laid the child carefully in its final resting place with its head to the rising sun. He folded its little hands across its breast, and closed its fingers around a small wooden crucifix; and it seemed, as they thought it was, happy at escaping the troubles of an uncertain world. There were no tears shed; on the contrary, all were cheerful. And though it appeared heartless, it was not because the father did not love his child, but because he and all his friends had been taught to believe, and were firm in the conviction, that, taken away so young, it was transferred immediately to a better world. The father sprinkled a handful of dirt over its face; the grave digger took his shovel and in a few moments the little grave was filled up; then, preceded by the boy playing on his violin, we all went away together. The next morning with great regret I took leave of my kind friends and returned to San José.

It is my misfortune to be the sport of other men's wives. I lost the best servant I had in Guatemala because his wife

was afraid to trust him with me. On my return I found Hezoos at the convent waiting for me, and, while he was putting my things in order, without looking me in the face he began to tell me of the hardships of his wife, of how much *la pobre* had suffered during his absence, and of how difficult it was for a married woman to get along without her husband. I saw to what he was tending, and feeling, particularly since the recurrence of my fever and ague, the importance of having a good servant in the long journey I had before me, with the selfishness of a traveler I encouraged his vagabond propensities by telling him that in a few weeks he would be tired of home and would not have so good an opportunity of getting away. This seemed so sensible to him that he discontinued his hints and went off contented.

At three o'clock I felt uncertain in regard to my chill, but, determined not to give way, I dressed myself and went to dine with Mr. Steipel. Before sitting down, the blueness of my lips and a tendency to use superfluous syllables betrayed me; and my old enemy shook me all the way back to the convent and into bed. Fever followed, and I lay in bed all next day, receiving many visits at the door and a few inside. One of the latter was from Hezoos, who returned stronger than before. Coming to the point, he said that although he, himself, was anxious to go with me, his wife would not consent. I felt that if she had fairly taken the field against me it was all over, but I told him that he had made a contract and was already overpaid, and I sent her a pair of gold earrings to keep her quiet.

On each of four days in succession I had a recurrence of chill and fever. Every kindness was shown me in the convent; friends visited me and Dr. Bridley came over from Cartago to attend me, but withal I was desponding. When the day fixed for setting out with Alvarado arrived, it was impossible for me to go; Dr. Bridley had advised me that it would be unwise, while any tendency to the disease remained, to undertake a journey. There would be six days of desert traveling to the port of San Juan, without a house on the road, and with mountains to cross and rivers to ford. The whole party was to go on foot except myself; four extra men would be needed to pass my mule over some difficult

places, and there would always be more or less rain. San Juan was a collection of miserable shanties, and from that place it would be necessary to embark in a bongo for ten or fifteen days on an unhealthy river. Besides all this, I had either to return by the *Cosmopolita* to Sonsonate, or to go to Guatemala by land, a journey of twelve hundred miles through a country destitute of accommodations for travelers and dangerous from the convulsions of civil war. At night, as I lay alone in the convent and by the light of a small candle saw the bats flying along the roof, I felt gloomy and would have been glad to have been at home.

Still I could not bear the idea of losing all I came for. The land route which lay along the coast of the Pacific, was for three days the same as to the port. I determined to go by land, but, by the advice of Dr. Bradley, to start in time to reach the vessel. In the hope that I would not have another chill, I bought two of the best mules in San José, one being that on which I had ascended the volcano of Cartago, and the other a *macho*, or he-mule, which, though not more than half broken, was the finest animal I ever mounted.

But to return to Hezoos. The morning after I gave him the earrings he did not come, but he sent word that he had the fever and ague. The next day he had it much worse and, satisfied that I must lose him, I sent him word that if he would procure me a good substitute I would release him. This raised him from bed, and in the afternoon he came with his substitute, who had very much the air of being the first man he had picked up in the street. His dress was a pair of cotton trousers, with a shirt outside, and a high, bell-crowned, narrow-brimmed black straw hat; all that he had in the world was on his back. His hair was cut very close except in front, where it hung in long locks over his face; in short, he was the *beau ideal* of a Central American loafer. I did not like his looks, but I was at the time under the influence of fever, and told him I could give him no answer. He came again the next day at a moment when I wanted some service; and by degrees, though I never hired him, he quietly engaged me as his master.

The morning before I left, Don Agustín Gutiérrez called upon me and, seeing this man at the door, expressed his sur-

prise, telling me that he was the town blackguard, a drunkard, gambler, robber, and assassin; that the first night on the road he would rob and perhaps murder me. Shortly after Mr. Lawrence entered and told me that he had just heard the same thing. I discharged this loafer at once, and apparently not much to his surprise, though he still continued round the convent, as he said, in my employ. It was very important for me to set out in time for the vessel, and I had but that day to look out for another guide. Hezoos was astonished at the changes time had made in the character of his friend. He said that he had known him when a boy, and had not seen him in many years till the day he brought him to me, when he had stumbled upon him in the street. Not feeling perfectly released, after a great deal of running about he brought me another man whose name was Nicolás. In any other country I should have called him a mulatto, but in Central America there are so many different shades that I am at a loss how to designate him. By trade a mason, Hezoos had encountered him at his work and talked him into a desire to see Guatemala and Mexico and come back as rich as himself. He presented himself just as he left his work, with his shirt sleeves rolled up above his elbows and his trousers above his knees: a rough diamond for a valet. But he was honest, could take care of mules, and make chocolate; I did not ask more. He was married, too, and as his wife did not interfere with me, I liked him the better for it.

In the afternoon, being the last before I started, in company with Mr. Lawrence I visited the coffee plantations of Don Mariano Montealegre. It was a lovely situation, and with great good taste Don Mariano lived there a great part of the year. He was at his factory, and his son mounted his horse and accompanied us. It was a beautiful walk, but in that country gentlemen never walk.

The cultivation of coffee on the plains of San José had increased rapidly within a few years. Seven years before, the whole crop had not been more than five hundred quintals, but this year it was supposed that it would amount to more than ninety thousand. Don Mariano was one of

the largest planters, and had three *cafetales* in that neighborhood; we visited one which contained twenty-seven thousand trees, to which he was preparing to make great additions the next year. He had expended a large sum of money in buildings and machinery; and though his countrymen said he would ruin himself, every year he planted more trees. His wife, la señora, was busily engaged in superintending the details of husking and drying the grains. In San José, by the way, all the ladies were what might be called good businessmen—they kept stores, bought and sold goods, looked out for bargains, and were particularly knowing in the article of coffee.

## Chapter XVIII

*Departure for Guatemala. Esparta. Town of Costa Rica. The barranca. History of a countryman. Wild scenery. Hacienda of Aranjuez. River Lagartos. Cerro of Collito. Herds of deer. Santa Rosa. Don Juan José Bonilla. An earthquake. A cattle farm. Bagaces. Guanacaste. An agreeable welcome. Belle of Guanacaste. Pleasant lodgings. Cordilleras. Volcanoes of Rincón and Orosi. Hacienda of Santa Teresa. Sunset view. The Pacific again.*

ON the thirteenth day of February I mounted for my journey to Guatemala. My equipage was reduced to articles of the last necessity: a hammock of striped cotton cloth laid over my *pellón*, a pair of alforjas, and a poncho strapped on behind. Behind him Nicolás had strung across his *albarda*, or packsaddle, a pair of leather *cojines*, in shape like buckets with the inner side flat, which contained biscuit, chocolate, sausages, and *dulces*; and in front, he carried on the pommel my wearing apparel rolled up in an oxhide after the fashion of the country. During my whole stay at the convent the attentions of the padre were unremitted. Besides the services he actually rendered me, I have no doubt he considers that he saved my life for, during my sickness, he entered my room while I was preparing to shave and made me desist from so dangerous an operation. I washed my face by stealth, but his kindness added another to the list of obligations I was already under to the padres of Central America.

I felt great satisfaction at being able once more to resume my journey, pleased with the lightness of my equipage and

the spirit of my mules. I looked my journey of twelve hundred miles boldly in the face. Then, all at once I heard a clattering from behind, and Nicolás swept by me on a full run. My macho was what was called *espantadizo*, or scary, and he was startled; I had very little strength, and was fairly run away with. If I had bought my beasts for racing I should have had no reason to complain; but, unluckily, my saddle turned, and I came to the ground. Fortunately I cleared the stirrups. The beast ran, scattering on the road pistols, holsters, saddlecloths, and saddle, and he continued on bare-backed toward the town. To my great relief, some muleteers intercepted him and saved my credit as a horseman in San José. We were more than an hour in recovering scattered articles and repairing broken trappings.

For three days my road was the same that I had traveled in entering Costa Rica. The fourth morning I rose without any recurrence of fever. Mr. Lawrence had kindly borne me company from San José, and was still with me; he had relieved me from all trouble and had made my journey so easy and comfortable that, instead of being wearied, I was recruited, and I abandoned all idea of returning by sea.

At seven o'clock we started and in half an hour reached Esparta. From this place to Nicaragua, a distance of three hundred miles, the road lay through a wilderness; except the frontier town of Costa Rica,<sup>1</sup> there were only a few straggling haciendas, twenty, thirty, and forty miles apart. I replenished my stock of provisions, my last purchase being a yard and a half of American cotton from a Massachusetts factory, a material called by the imposing name of *Mantía del Norte*.

In half an hour we crossed the Barranca, a broad, rapid, and beautiful river; but it lost in my eyes all its beauty, for here Mr. Lawrence left me. Since the day of my arrival at San José he had been almost constantly with me; he had accompanied me on every excursion, and during my sickness had attended me constantly. He was a native of Middletown in Connecticut, about fifty years old, and by trade a silver-

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1. Stephens is probably referring to the town of Liberia.



smith; with the exception of a single return visit, he had been nineteen years away from home. In 1822 he had gone to Peru, where, besides carrying on his legitimate business upon a large scale, his science and knowledge of the precious metals brought him into prominent public positions. In 1830 he sold a mint to the government of Costa Rica, and was offered the place of its director. Business connected with the mint brought him to Costa Rica, and during his absence he left his affairs in the hands of a partner, who mismanaged them and died. Mr. Lawrence returned to Peru, but without engaging in active business; in the meantime the mint which the government had purchased from him had become worn out, and another, imported from Europe, was so complicated that no one in Costa Rica could work it. Offers were made to Mr. Lawrence of such a nature that, connected with mining purposes of his own, they induced him to return. Don Manuel de Aguilar was then *Jefe del Estado*, but when Mr. Lawrence arrived at the port he met Don Manuel banished and flying from the state. The whole policy of the government was changed. Mr. Lawrence remained quietly in San José, and when I left he intended to establish himself at Puntarenas to traffic with the pearl fishermen. Such is, in brief, the history of one of our many countrymen scattered in different parts of the world; it would be a proud thing for the country if all sustained as honorable a reputation as his. We exchanged adieus from the backs of our mules, and, not to be sentimental, lighted our cigars. Whether we shall ever meet again or not is uncertain.

I was again setting out alone. I had traveled so long with companions or in ships that, when the moment for plunging into the wilderness came, my courage almost failed me. And it was a moment that required some energy, for we struck off immediately into one of the wildest paths that I met on the whole of that desolate journey. The trees were so close as to darken it, and the branches so low that it was necessary to keep the head constantly bent to avoid hitting them. The noise of the locusts, which had accompanied us since we reached the mountain of Aguacate, here became startling.

Very soon families of monkeys, walking heavily on the tops of the trees, disturbed these noisy tenants of the woods and sent them flying around us in such swarms that we were obliged to beat them off with our hats. My macho snorted and pulled violently on the bit, dragging me against the trees; and I could not help thinking, if this is the outset, what will be the end?

Parting with Mr. Lawrence advanced the position of Nicolás. Man is a talking animal; Nicolás was particularly so, and very soon I knew the history of his life. His father was a muleteer, and he seemed constructed for the same rough business; but after a few journeys to Nicaragua he retired in disgust, married, and had two children. The trying moment of his life was when he was compelled to serve as a soldier. His great regret was that he could not read or write; and his great astonishment, that he worked hard and yet could not get on. He wanted to go with me to Mexico, to go to my country, to be away two years, and to return with a sum of money in hand, as Hezoos had done. He knew that General Morazán was a great man, for when he visited Costa Rica there was a great firing of cannons and a ball. He was a poor man himself, and did not know what the wars were about. He supposed that Don Manuel de Aguilar had been expelled because Carrillo wanted to be chief.

We continued in the woods till about two o'clock, when, turning off by a path to the right, we reached a clearing, on one side of which was the hacienda of Aranjuez. The entrance to the house was by a ladder from the outside, and underneath was a sort of storehouse. It was occupied by a major-domo, a mestizo, and his wife. Near it was the *cocina*, where the wife and another woman were at work. The major-domo was sitting on the ground doing nothing, and two able-bodied men were helping him.

The major-domo told us that he had a good *potrero* for the mules, and the house promised a good resting place for me. Outside and extending all around was a rough board piazza, one side of which commanded a view of the ocean. I seated myself on this side, and very soon Nicolás brought

me my dinner which consisted of tortillas, rice cooked with lard, which he brought in a shell, and salt which he brought in his hands. As I finished with a cup of chocolate, I could not but think of the blessings wasted by this major-domo. In the same situation, one of our backwoodsmen, with his axe, his wife, and two pairs of twins, would in a few years surround himself with all the luxuries that good land can give.

After dinner I led the mules to a stream, on the banks of which were tufts of young grass. While I was sitting there, two wild turkeys flew over my head and lighted on a tree near by. Sending Nicolás for my gun, I soon had a bird large enough for a household dinner and I sent it immediately to the house to be converted into provender. At sundown I returned to the house to discover a deficiency in my preparations which I was to feel during the whole journey, that is, of candles. A light was manufactured by filling a broken clay vessel with grease and coiling in it some twisted cotton, leaving one end sticking out about an inch. The workmen on the hacienda took advantage of the light and brought out a pack of cards. The wife of the major-domo joined them and, seeing no chance of a speedy termination of the game, I undressed myself and went to bed. When they finished the game, the woman got into a bed directly opposite mine and, before lying down, lighted another cigar. The men did the same on the floor, and till the cigars went out they continued discussing the game. The major-domo was already asleep in the hammock. All night the wife of the major-domo smoked, and the men snuffled and snored.

At two o'clock I rose and went out of doors. The moon was shining, and the freshness of the morning air was grateful. I woke Nicolás, and paying the major-domo as he lay in his hammock, at three o'clock we resumed our journey. I had been charmed with this place when we reached it, but disgusted when we left it. The people were kind and of as good disposition as the expectation of pay could make them, but their habits were intolerable. But the freshness of the morning air restored my equanimity. The moon shed a glorious light over the clearing, lifting the darkness of the

forest; we heard only the surge of monkeys, as, disturbed by our noise, they moved on the tops of the trees.

At eight o'clock we reached the River Lagartos, breaking rapidly over a bed of white sand and gravel; it was clear as crystal and shaded by trees, the branches of which met at the fording place to form a complete arbor. We dismounted, took off the saddles from our mules and tied the mules to a tree; we then kindled a fire on the bank and breakfasted. Wild scenes had long lost the charm of novelty, but this I would not have exchanged for a *déjeuner à la fourchette* at the best restaurant of Paris. The wild turkey was not more than enough for my household, which consisted of Nicolás.

Resuming our journey, in two hours we emerged from the woods and came into an open country in sight of the Cerro of Collito, a fine bare conical peak, which stood alone and was covered with grass to the top. At twelve o'clock we reached the rancho of an Indian. On one side was a group of orange trees loaded with fruit, and in front a shed thatched with leaves of Indian corn. An old Indian woman was sitting in the door, and a sick Indian was lying asleep under the shed. It was excessively hot and, riding under the shed, I dismounted, threw myself into a ragged hammock, and while quenching my thirst with an orange fell asleep. The last thing I remembered was seeing Nicolás drive into the hut a miserable half-starved chicken. At two o'clock he woke me and set before me the unfortunate little bird, nearly burned up; the expense of the chicken, with oranges *ad libitum*, was six and a quarter cents, which the old woman wished to commute for a charge of gunpowder. I was very poor in this and would rather have given her a dollar, but I could not help adding the charge of gunpowder to the coin.

At two o'clock we set off again. We had already made a day's journey, but I had a good resting place for the night in view. It was excessively hot, but very soon we reached the woods again. We had not gone far before a deer crossed our path. It was the first I had seen in the country, which was almost destitute of all kinds of game. Indeed, during my whole journey, except at the wild turkey, I had fired but

twice, and then merely to procure curious birds; and most unfortunately, in pursuance of my plan of encumbering myself as little as possible, I had with me but a few charges of duck shot and half a dozen pistol balls. Very soon I saw two deer together and within reach of a ball. Both barrels of my gun were loaded with duck shot, and I dismounted and followed them into the woods, endeavoring to get within reach. In the course of an hour I saw perhaps a dozen deer, and in that hour I fired away my last duck shot. I was resolved not to use my pistol balls, and as both barrels were empty, I kept quiet. As the evening approached the deer increased, and I am safe in saying I saw fifty or sixty, and many within rifle shot. Occasionally cattle peeped at us through the trees as wild as the deer. The sun was getting low when we came out into a large clearing, on one side of which stood the hacienda of Santa Rosa. The house stood on the right, and directly in front, against the side of a hill, was a large cattle yard, enclosed by a hard clay wall; it was divided into three parts and filled with cows and calves. On the left was an almost boundless plain interspersed with groves of trees; as we rode up, a gentleman in the yard sent a servant to open the gate. Don Juan José Bonilla met me at the porch and, before I had time to present my letter, welcomed me to Santa Rosa.

Don Juan was a native of Cartago, a gentleman by birth and education, and of one of the oldest families in Costa Rica. He had traveled over his own country and, what was very unusual in that region, had visited the United States; and though laboring under the disadvantage of not knowing the language, he spoke with great interest of our institutions. He had been an active member of the Liberal Party; he had labored to carry out its principles in the administration of the government and to save his country from the disgrace of falling back into despotism. He had been persecuted and heavy contributions had been laid upon his property; and four years before he had withdrawn from Cartago and retired to this hacienda.

But political animosity never dies. A detachment of soldiers was sent to arrest him, and, that no suspicion might be excited, they were sent by sea and landed at a port on the

Pacific within the bounds of his own estate. Don Juan received an intimation of their approach, and sent a servant to reconnoiter. When the servant returned with the intelligence that they were within half a day's march, he mounted his horse to escape, but near his own gate he was thrown and his leg badly broken. He was carried back to his house insensible; when the soldiers arrived and found him in bed, they made him rise. They put him on horseback and hurried him to the boundary line of the state of Costa Rica which is a river in the midst of a wilderness. After communicating to him his sentence of banishment, and death if he returned, they left him at the frontier. He had been obliged to travel on horseback to Nicaragua, a journey of four days. He never recovered the use of his leg, which remained two or three inches shorter than the other. After two years in exile, on the election of Don Manuel de Aguilar as chief of the state, he returned. On the expulsion of Don Manuel he retired again to his hacienda, and at the time of our arrival he was busily engaged in making repairs for the reception of his family; but he did not know at what moment another order might come to expel him from his home.

While sitting at the supper table we heard a noise over our heads; which seemed to me like the opening of the roof. Don Juan threw his eyes to the ceiling and suddenly started from his chair, threw his arms around the neck of a servant, and with the fearful word "*temblor!* (an earthquake! an earthquake!)" all rushed for the doors. I sprang from my chair, made one bound across the room, and cleared the piazza. The earth rolled like the pitching of a ship in a heavy sea. My step was high, my feet barely touched the ground, and my arms were thrown up involuntarily to save myself from falling. I was the last to start, but, once under way, I was the last to stop. Halfway across the yard I stumbled over a man on his knees, and fell. I never felt myself so feeble a thing before. At this moment I heard Don Juan calling to me. He was leaning on the shoulder of his servant, with his face to the door, crying to me to come out of the house. It was pitchy dark; within was the table at which we had sat with a single candle, the light of which extended far enough to show a few of the kneeling figures with their faces

to the door. We looked anxiously in and waited for the shock which should prostrate the strong walls and lay the roof on the ground. There was something awful in our position, with our faces to the door, shunning the place which at all other times offers shelter to man. The shocks were continued for perhaps two minutes, during which time it required an effort to stand firm. The return of the earth to steadiness was almost as violent as the shock. We waited a few minutes after the last vibration, and then Don Juan said it was over and, assisted by his servant, he entered the house. I had been the last to leave it, but I was the last to return; and my chair lying with its back on the floor gave an intimation of the haste with which I had decamped. The houses in Costa Rica are the best in the country for resisting these shocks. They are long and low, and built of adobes, or undried bricks, two feet long and one broad, which are made of clay mixed with straw to give adhesion. The bricks are laid when soft with upright posts between, so that they are dried by the sun into one mass, which moves with the surface of the earth.

Before the evening was over I forgot the earthquake in a minor trouble. The uncultivated grounds of Central America teem with noxious insects. Riding all day in the woods, striking my head against the branches of trees had brought ticks down upon me in such numbers that I could brush them off with my hand. I had suffered so much during the day that twice I was obliged to strip at a stream and tear them out of my flesh, which gave me only temporary relief for lumps of irritation were left. In the midst of serious disquisitions with Don Juan, impolite as it was, I was obliged to use my nails violently and constantly. I was fain to entreat him to go out and give me the room to myself. A moment after he retired all my clothes were out of doors, and I tore the vipers out by the teeth; but Don Juan to my relief sent a deaf and dumb boy, who, by touching them with a ball of black wax, drew them from their burrowing places without any pain; yet they left behind wounds from which I did not recover in a long time.

Early in the morning two horses were at the door and two servants in attendance for a ride. Don Juan mounted the

same horse which he had ridden in his exile, and was attended by the same servants. Heretofore I had always heard constant complaints of servants, and to do them justice, I think they are the worst I ever knew; but Don Juan's were the best in the world, and it was evident that they thought he was the best master.

The estate of Don Juan covered as much ground as a German principality, containing two hundred thousand acres, and bounded on one side for a long distance by the Pacific Ocean. A small portion of it was cultivated, but not more than enough to raise maize for the workmen; the rest was a roaming ground for cattle. More than ten thousand animals were wandering over it, almost as wild as the deer; they were never seen except as they crossed a path in the woods, or at the season when they were lassoed for the purpose of taking an account of the increase.

We had not gone far before we saw three deer all close together and not far from us; in the course of an hour we saw more than twenty. It was exceedingly vexatious, the first time I was in a country where there was anything to shoot at, to be so wholly unprovided with ammunition, and I had no chance of supplying myself till I was out of that region. Don Juan was incapacitated for sporting by his lameness; in fact, deer shooting was not considered sporting, and venison not fit to eat.

I had set out on this long journey without any cargo mule because of the difficulty of procuring one that could keep pace with the riding beasts and because we had felt the inconvenience of being encumbered with luggage. Besides Don Juan's kindness to me at his house, he also furnished me with a mule which he had broken expressly for his own use in rapid journeys between Cartago and the hacienda, and which he warranted me, with a light load, would trot and keep up with mine.

Late in the afternoon I left his hospitable dwelling. Don Juan, with his deaf and dumb boy, accompanied me a league on the way, when we dismounted and took leave of each other. My new mule, like myself, was very reluctant to leave Don Juan; she seemed to have a sentiment that she should never see her old master again. Indeed, it was so difficult to



get her along that Nicolás tied her by the halter to his mule's tail, after a manner common in the country, and led her along with me following at her heels. The deer were more numerous than I had yet seen them, and I now looked at them only as animating a beautiful landscape.

At dark we began to have apprehensions about the road. There was a difficult mountain pass before us, and Nicolás wanted to stop and wait till the moon rose; but as that would derange the journey for the next day, I pushed on for more than an hour through the woods. The mules stumbled along in the dark, and very soon we lost all traces of a path. While trying to find it, we heard the crash of a falling tree, which in the darkness sounded appalling and made us hesitate to enter the woods. Determined to wait for the moon, I dismounted. Peering into the darkness, I saw a glimmering light on the left. We shouted with all our strength, and were answered by a pack of barking dogs; moving in the direction of the light, we reached a hut where three or four workmen were lying on the ground. They were at first disposed to be merry and impertinent when we asked for a guide to the next hacienda, but then one of them recognized my cargo mule. He said that he had known it since he was a child (rather doubtful praise of my new purchase), and he was at length induced to make us an offer of his services. A horse was brought around; he was large, wild, and furious, as if never bitted. He snorted, reared, and almost made the ground shake at every tread; and, before the rider was fairly on his back, he was tearing in the dark across the plain. Making a wide sweep, he returned, and the guide, releasing the cargo mule from that of Nicolás, tied her to the tail of his horse and started to lead the way. Even with the drag of the cargo mule it was impossible to moderate his pace, and we were obliged to follow at a most unhappy rate. It was the first piece of bad road we had met with; it was broken and stony, with many sharp turns, and ascents and descents. Fortunately, while we were in the woods, the moon rose, touching with a silvery light the tops of the trees; when we reached the bank of the river it was almost as light as day. Here my guide left me, and I lost all confidence in the

moon, for by her deccitful light I had slipped into his hand a gold piece instead of a silver one, without either of us knowing it.

As we ascended the bank after crossing the stream, the hacienda was in full sight. The occupants were in bed, but Don Manuel, to whom I had been recommended by Don Juan, rose to receive me. On the bank of the river, near the house, was a large sawmill, the first I had seen in the country; it had been built, Don Manuel told me, by an American, who afterward straggled to Guatemala and was killed in some popular insurrection.

At daylight the next morning, as the workmen on the hacienda were about to go to work, we set off again. In an hour we heard the sound of a horn, giving notice of the approach of a drove of cattle. We drew up into the woods to let them pass; they came with a cloud of dust, the faces of the drivers covered, and would have trampled to death anything that impeded their progress.

At eleven o'clock we entered the village of Bagaces. We had made tremendous journeys, and it was the first time in four days that we had seen anything but single haciendas, but we rode through without stopping, except to ask for a cup of water.

Late in the afternoon we came into a broad avenue and saw marks of wheels. At dusk we reached the river which runs by the suburbs of Guanacaste,<sup>2</sup> the frontier town of Costa Rica. The pass was occupied by an ox-cart, drawn by four stubborn oxen, which would not go ahead and could not go back. We were detained half an hour, and it was dark when we entered the town. We passed through the plaza, before the door of the church, which was lighted up for vespers, and rode to a house at which I had been directed to stop. Nicolás went in to make preliminary inquiries; returning, he told me to dismount and unloaded the luggage mule. I went in, took off my spurs, and stretched myself on a bench. Soon it struck me that my host was not particularly

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2. There is no town in this location with this name. Stephens is probably again referring to Liberia, the capital of the province of Guanacaste.

glad to see me. Several children came in and stared, and then ran back into another room. In a few minutes I received the compliments of the lady of the house, and her regret that she would not be able to accommodate me. I was indignant at Nicolás, who had merely asked whether such a person lived there, and without more ado had sent me in. I left the house, and with the halter of my macho in one hand and spurs in the other, and Nicolás following with the mules, I sought the house of the commandant. I found him standing on the piazza with the key in his hand and all his household stuff packed up outside; he was only waiting for the moon to rise before setting out for another post. I believe he regretted that he could not accommodate me, nor could he refer me to any other house; but he sent his servant to look for one, and I waited nearly an hour for a bidder.

In the meantime I made inquiries about my road. I did not wish to continue on the direct route to Nicaragua, but to go first to the port of San Juan on the Pacific, the proposed termination of the canal to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The commandant regretted that I had not come one day sooner. He mentioned a fact of which I was aware before, that Mr. Baily, an English gentleman, who had been employed by the government to survey the canal route, had resided for some time at the port, and added that since his departure the place had been perfectly desolate; no one ever visited it, not a person in the place knew the road to it, and, unluckily, a man who had been in Mr. Baily's employ there had left that morning for Nicaragua. Most fortunately, on inquiry, the man was found to be still in the place, but he, too, intended to set out as soon as the moon rose. I had no inducement to remain; nobody seemed very anxious for the honor of my company, and I would have gone on immediately if the mules had been able to continue. I made an arrangement with him and his son to wait till three in the morning, then to conduct me to the port, and thence to Nicaragua.

At length the commandant's servant returned and conducted me to a house with a little shop in front, where I was received by an old lady with a *buenas noches* that almost

surprised me into an idea that I was welcome. I entered through the shop and passed into a parlor which contained a hammock, an interlaced bedstead, and a very neat *catre* with a gauze mosquito netting and pink bows at the corners. I was agreeably disappointed with my *posada*, and while I was conversing with the old lady and dozing over a cup of chocolate, I heard a lively voice at the door. A young lady entered, with two or three young men in attendance, who came up to the table in front of me, and throwing back a black mantilla, bade me *buenas noches*. Putting out her hand, she said that she had heard in church that I was at her house; she said that she was so glad of it, that no strangers ever came there, that the place was completely out of the world, that it was very dull, etc., etc. I was so surprised that I must have looked very stupid. She was not regularly handsome, but her mouth and eyes were beautiful; and her manner was so different from the cold, awkward, and bashful air of her countrywomen, and so much like the frank and fascinating welcome which a young lady at home might extend to a friend after a long absence, that if the table had not been between us I could have taken her in my arms and kissed her. As it was I pulled up my coat collar and forgot all my troubles and perplexities.

Though living in that little remote town, like young ladies in large cities, she had a fancy for strangers, which at the time I regarded as a delightful trait of character in a woman. Her everyday beaux had no chance. At first they were very civil to me, but then they became short and crusty, and, very much to my satisfaction, took themselves off. It had been so long since I had felt the least interest in a woman that I gave myself a benefit. The simplest stories of other countries and other people were to her romance, and her eye kindled as she listened. Soon the transition came from facts to feelings, and then that highest earthly pleasure of being lifted above everyday thoughts by the enthusiasm of a high-minded girl.

We sat up till twelve o'clock. The mother, who at first wearied me, I found exceedingly agreeable. Indeed, I had seldom known a more interesting old lady, for she pressed

me to remain two or three days and rest. She said the place was dull, but that her daughter would try to make it agreeable; her daughter said nothing, but looked unutterable things.

All pleasure is fleeting. Twelve o'clock was an unprecedented hour for that country. My ordinary prudence in looking out for a sleeping place had not deserted me. Two little boys had taken possession of the leather bed and the old lady had retired; the beautiful little *catre* remained unoccupied, and the young lady withdrew, telling me that this was to be my bed. I do not know why, but I felt uneasy. I opened the mosquito net. In that country beds are not used, and an oxhide or mat, often not so clean as it might be, is the substitute. This was a mat, very fine, and clean as if perfectly new. At the head was a lovely pillow with a pink muslin covering, and over it was a thin white pillowcase with a bewitching ruffle. Whose cheek had rested on that pillow? I pulled off my coat, walked up and down the room, and waked up one of the boys. It was as I supposed. I lay down, but could not sleep and determined not to continue my journey the next day.

At three o'clock the guide knocked at the door. The mules were already saddled, and Nicolás was putting on the luggage. I had often clung to my pillow, but never as I did to that pink one with its ruffled border. I told Nicolás that the guide must go home and wait another day. The guide refused. It was the young man; his father had already gone and had ordered him to follow. Very soon I heard a light footstep, and a soft voice expostulating with the guide. Indignant at his obstinacy, I ordered him away; but very soon I reflected that I could not procure another and might lose the great object I had in view in making this long journey. I called him back and attempted to bribe him, but his only answer was that his father had started at the rising of the moon and had ordered him to follow. At length it was arranged that he should go and overtake his father and bring him back, but perhaps his father would not come. I was pertinacious until I carried the point, and then I was more indifferent. After all, why should I wait? Nicolás said we

could get our clothes washed in Nicaragua. I walked out of doors and resolved that it was folly to lose the chance of examining a canal route for the belle of Guanacaste. I hurried through my preparations and bade her, I may say, an affectionate farewell. There is not the least chance that I shall ever see her again. Living in a secluded town unknown beyond the borders of its own unknown state between the Andes and the Pacific Ocean, probably she is already the happy wife of some worthy townsman and has forgotten the stranger who owes to her some of the happiest moments he passed in Central America.

It was now broad daylight. It was very rare that I had left a place with so much regret, but I turned my sorrow into anger, and wreaked it upon Nicolás and the guide. The wind was very high, and, sweeping over the great plain, it raised such clouds of dust that riding was both disagreeable and difficult. This ought to have had some effect in restoring my equanimity, but it did not. All day we had on our right the grand range of Cordilleras, and crowning it at this point the great volcanoes of Rincón and Orosi. From thence a vast plain, over which the wind swept furiously, extended to the sea.

At one o'clock we came in sight of the hacienda of Santa Teresa, standing on a great elevation and still a long way before us. The hacienda was the property of Don Agustín Gutiérrez of San José and, with two others, was under the charge of his son, Don Manuel. A letter from his father had advised him of my coming, and he received me as an old acquaintance. The situation of the house was finer than that of any I had seen. It was high and commanded a view of an immense plain studded with trees in groups and in forest. The ocean was not visible, but we could see the opposite coast of the Gulf of Nicoya, and the point of the port of Culebra, the finest on the Pacific, only three and a half leagues distant. The hacienda contained a thousand mares and four hundred horses, more than a hundred of which were in sight from the door. It was grand enough to give the owner ideas of empire.

Toward evening I counted from the door of the house seventeen deer, and Don Manuel told me that he had a con-

tract for furnishing two thousand skins. In the season a good hunter gets twenty-five a day. Even the workmen will not eat them, and they are only shot for the hide and horns. He had forty workmen, and an ox was killed every day. Near the house was an artificial lake, more than a mile in circumference, which had been built as a drinking place for cattle. And yet the proprietors of these haciendas are not rich. The ground is worth absolutely nothing; the whole value is in the stock. Allowing ten dollars a head for the horses and mares would probably give the full value of this apparently magnificent estate.

Here, too, I could have passed a week with great satisfaction, but the next morning I resumed my journey. Though early in the dry season, the ground was parched and the streams were dried up. We carried a large calabash with water, and stopping under the shade of a tree, we turned our mules out on the plain and breakfasted. As we resumed our journey, I was riding in advance with my poncho flying in the wind, when I saw a drove of cattle stop and look wildly at me, and then rush furiously toward me. I attempted to run, but, remembering the bullfights at Guatemala, I tore off my poncho and had just time to get behind a high rock as the whole herd darted by at their full speed. We continued our route, from time to time catching glimpses of the Pacific, till we reached a clear, open place, completely protected from the wind which was called the Boca of the Mountain of Nicaragua. A large caravan had already encamped, and among the muleteers Nicolás found acquaintances from San José. Their cargoes consisted of potatoes, sweet bread, and *dulces* for Nicaragua.

Toward evening I climbed to the top of one of the hills, and had a magnificent sunset view. On the top the wind blew so fiercely that I was obliged to shelter myself under the lee. Behind me was the great range of Cordilleras, along which we had ridden all day, with their volcanoes. On the left were the headlands of the bays of Tortugas and Salinas, and in front, the great body of the Pacific Ocean; and, what was quite as agreeable a spectacle to a traveler, my mules were up to their knees in grass. I returned to the encamp-

ment and found that my guide had made me a *casita*, or small house, to sleep in. It was formed by cutting two forked sticks about four feet high and as thick as a man's arm, and driving them into the ground. Another stick was laid in the crotches, and against this other sticks were laid slanting, with leaves and branches wound in between them to protect me from the dew and tolerably well from the wind.

I never had a servant in Central America who was not a brute with mules. I was obliged to look out myself for their food, and also to examine their backs to see if they were hurt by the saddles. My macho I always saddled myself. Nicolás had saddled the cargo mule so badly the day before that when he took off the *aparejo* (a huge saddle covering half the beast) her shoulder was raw, and in the morning even pointing at it made her shrink as if touched with a hot iron. I was unwilling to put the *aparejo* upon her back, and tried to hire a mule from one of the muleteers. Since I could not, I put the cargo upon the other mule, made Nicolás walk, and let the cargo mule go loose. I left the *aparejo* at the base of the mountain: a great piece of profligacy, as Nicolás and the guide considered it.

We wound for a short distance among the hills that enclosed us, ascended a slight range, and came down directly upon the shore of the sea. I always had a high feeling when I touched the shore of the Pacific, and never more so than at this desolate place. The waves rolled grandly and broke with a solemn roar. The mules were startled, and my macho shrank from the heaving water. I spurred him into it, and at a moment when I was putting in my pocket some shells which Nicolás had picked up, he ran away. He had attempted it several times before in the woods; and now, having a fair chance, I gave him the full sweep of the coast. We continued nearly an hour on the shore, and then, crossing a high, rough headland, we again came down upon the sea. Four times we mounted headlands and again descended to the shore, and the heat became almost intolerable. The fifth ascent was steep, but we came upon a table covered with a thick forest, through which we proceeded until we came to a small clearing with two huts. We stopped at the first, which was oc-



cupied by a black man and his wife. He had plenty of corn; there was a fine pasture ground near, so hemmed in by the woods that there was no danger of the mules escaping. I hired the man and woman to sleep out of doors and give me the hovel to myself.

## Chapter XIX

*The Flores. The San Juan. Nature's Solitude. Primitive cookery. Harbor of San Juan. Route of the great canal to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Nicaragua. Survey for the canal. Lake of Nicaragua. Plan of the canal. Lockage. Estimate of cost. Former efforts to construct the canal. Its advantages. Central American hospitality. Tierra Caliente. Horrors of civil war.*

I ROSE about an hour before daylight and was in my saddle by break of day. We watered our mules at the River Flores, the boundary line of the states of Costa Rica and Nicaragua.<sup>1</sup> In an hour we reached Skamaika, the name given to a single hut occupied by a negro, sick and alone. He was lying on a bedstead made of sticks, the very picture of wretchedness and desolation, worn to a skeleton by fever and ague. Soon after, we came to another hut, where two women were sick with fever. Nothing could be more wretched than these huts along the Pacific. They asked me for *remedios*, and I gave them some quinine, but with little hope of their ever benefiting by it. Probably both the negro and they are now in their graves.

At twelve o'clock we reached the River San Juan, the mouth of which was the proposed terminating point of the great canal. The road to Nicaragua crossed the stream, and ours followed it to the sea, the port being situated at its mouth. Our whole road had been desolate enough, but this far surpassed anything I had seen; as I looked at the little path that led to Nicaragua, I felt as if we were leaving a

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1. The San Juan River forms most of the boundary. The Flores is a small river on the Pacific side.

great highway. The valley of the river is about a hundred yards broad, and in the season of rain the whole is covered with water; but at this time the stream was small, and a great part of its bed dry. The stones were bleached by the sun, and there was no track or impression which gave the slightest indication of a path. Very soon this stony bed became contracted and lost; the stream ran through a different soil, and high grass, shrubs, and bushes grew luxuriantly up to its bank. We searched for the track on both sides of the river, and it was evident that since the last wet season no person had passed.

Leaving the river, we found the bushes higher than our heads, and so thick that at every two or three paces I became entangled and held fast; at length I dismounted, and my guide cleared a way for me on foot with his machete. Soon we reached the stream again and, crossing it, we entered the same dense mass on the opposite side. In this way we continued for nearly two hours, with the river for our line. We crossed it more than twenty times, and when it was shallow we rode in its bed. Farther down, the valley was open, stony, and barren, and the sun beat upon it with prodigious force; flocks of *xopilotes*, or turkey buzzards, hardly disturbed by our approach, moved away on a slow walk, or, with a lazy flap of the wings, rose to a low branch of the nearest tree. In one place a swarm of the ugly birds were feasting on the carcass of an alligator. Wild turkeys were more numerous than we had seen them before, and so tame that I shot one with my pistol. Deer looked at us without alarm, and on each side of the valley large black apes walked on the tops of the trees or sat quietly in the branches looking at us. Having, for the last time, crossed the river, which became broader and deeper until it emptied into the Pacific,<sup>2</sup> we entered the woods on the right, and reached the first station of Mr. Baily, which we found covered with young trees and bushes; the woods were thicker than before and the path

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2. On two or three occasions Stephens speaks of the San Juan River as emptying into the Pacific. Actually the San Juan connects the Atlantic and the Lake of Nicaragua, but it does not flow into the Pacific.

entirely undistinguishable. I had read reports, papers, and pamphlets on the subject of the great canal, and had expected at least to find a road to the port; but the desert of Arabia is not more desolate, and the track of the Children of Israel to the Red Sea a turnpike compared with it.

My beautiful gray, degraded into a cargo mule, chafed under her burden, and she began to obstruct and jerk first one way and then the other. The girths of the saddle became loose, the load turned on her side, and she rushed blindly forward, kicking, and threw herself among the bushes. Her back was badly hurt, and she was desperately frightened, but we were obliged to reload her. Fortunately, we were near the end of our day's journey.

On the border of the woods we reached the last stream at which fresh water was procurable; after filling our calabash, we entered a plain covered with high grass. In front was another piece of woodland, and on the left the River San Juan, now a large stream, emptying into the Pacific. In a few minutes we reached a small clearing so near the shore that the waves seemed breaking at our feet. We tied our mules under the shade of a large tree on the edge of the clearing. The site of Mr. Baily's rancho was on a nearby eminence, but hardly a vestige remained; though it commanded a fine view of the port and the sea, the afternoon sun was so hot that I fixed our encampment under the large tree. We hung our saddles, saddlecloths, and arms upon its branches and, while Nicolás and José gathered wood and made a fire, I found, what was always the most important and satisfactory part of the day's journey, excellent pasture for the mules.

The next thing was to take care of ourselves. We had no trouble in deciding what to have for dinner. We had made provision, as we supposed, for three days; but, as always, however abundant our supplies, they did not last more than one day. At this time all was eaten up by ourselves or by vermin; but for the wild turkey, we should have been obliged to dine upon chocolate. How the turkey should be cooked was a matter of deeply interesting consideration. Boiling it was the best way, but we had nothing to boil it in

except a small coffeepot. We attempted to make a gridiron of our stirrups and broil it, but those of Nicolás were wooden, and mine alone were not large enough. Roasting was a long and tedious process; but our guide had often been in such straits and, fixing in the ground two sticks with crotches, he laid another across, split open the turkey, and, securing it by sticks crosswise, hung it like a spread eagle before a blazing fire. When one side was burned, he turned the other. In an hour it was cooked, and in less than ten minutes eaten up. A cup of chocolate, heavy enough to keep the turkey from rising if it had been eaten with its wings on, followed, and I had dined.

Rested and refreshed, I walked down to the shore. Our encampment was in about the center of the harbor,<sup>3</sup> which was the finest I saw on the Pacific. It was not large, but it was beautifully protected, being almost in the form of the letter U. The arms are high and parallel, running nearly north and south and terminating in high perpendicular bluffs. As I afterward learned from Mr. Baily, the water is deep, and under either bluff, according to the wind, vessels of the largest class can ride with perfect safety. Supposing this to be correct, there is but one objection to this harbor, which I derived from Captain de Iriarte with whom I made the voyage from Sonsonate to Caldera. He had been nine years navigating the coast of the Pacific from Peru to the Gulf of California, and had made valuable notes, which he intends to publish in France. He told me that during the summer months, from November to May, the strong north winds which sweep over the Lake of Nicaragua pass with such violence through the Gulf of Papagayo that it is almost impossible for a vessel to enter the port of San Juan. Whether this is true to the extent that Captain de Iriarte supposes, and if it is true, how far steam tugs would be adequate to bring vessels in against such a wind, is for others to determine. But at the moment there seemed more palpable difficulties.

I walked along the shore down to the estuary of the river, which was here broad and deep. This was the proposed

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3. The harbor of San Juan del Sur.

termination of the great canal to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. I had read and examined all that had been published on this subject in England or this country; I had conferred with individuals; I had been sanguine, almost enthusiastic, in regard to this gigantic enterprise; but on the spot the scales fell from my eyes. The harbor was perfectly desolate and for years not a vessel had entered it; primeval trees grew around it and for miles there was not a habitation. I walked the shore alone. Since Mr. Baily left, not a person had visited it; probably the only thing that keeps it alive even in memory is the theorizing of scientific men, or the occasional visit of some Nicaragua fisherman, who, too lazy to work, seeks his food in the sea. It seemed preposterous to consider it the focus of a great commercial enterprise and to imagine that a city was to rise up out of the forest, that its desolate harbor was to be filled with ships, and that it was to become a great portal for the thoroughfare of nations. But the scene was magnificent. The sun was setting, and the high western headland threw a deep shade over the water. It was perhaps the last time in my life that I should see the Pacific; and in spite of fever and ague tendencies, I bathed once more in the great ocean.

It was after dark when I returned to my encampment. My attendants had not been idle; blazing logs of wood, piled three or four feet high, lighted up the darkness of the forest. We heard the barking of wolves, the scream of the mountain cat, and other wild beasts of the forest. I wrapped myself in my poncho and lay down to sleep. Nicolás threw more wood upon the burning piles and, as he stretched himself on the ground, hoped we would not be obliged to pass another night in this desolate place.

In the morning I had more trouble. My gray mule, running loose and drinking at every stream with her girths tight, had raised a swelling eight or ten inches. I attempted to put the cargo on my macho, with the intention of walking myself; but it was utterly impossible to manage him, and I was obliged to transfer it to the raw back of the cargo mule.

At seven o'clock we started; we recrossed the stream at which we had procured water and returned to the first station of Mr. Baily on the River San Juan, a mile and a half from

the sea. The river here had sufficient depth of water for large vessels, and it was from this point that Mr. Baily had commenced his survey to the Lake of Nicaragua. I sent Nicolás with the mules by the direct road, and set out with my guide to follow, as far as practicable, his line of survey. I did not know, until I found myself in this wilderness, how fortunate I had been in securing this guide. He had been Mr. Baily's pioneer in the whole of his exploration. He was a dark mestizo, and he gained his living by hunting bee-trees and cutting them down for the wild honey, which made him familiar with all the watercourses and secret depths of almost impenetrable forests. He had been selected by Mr. Baily out of all Nicaragua; for the benefit of any traveler who may feel an interest in this subject, his name is José Dionisio de Lerda and he lives at Nicaragua.<sup>4</sup>

It had been two years since Mr. Baily had taken his observations, and already in that rank soil the clearings were overgrown with trees twelve or fifteen feet high. My guide cleared a path for me with his machete and, working our way across the plain, we entered a valley, which ran in a great ravine called Quebrada Grande, between the mountain ranges of Zebadea and El Platina.<sup>5</sup> By a vigorous use of the machete I was enabled to follow Mr. Baily's line up the ravine to the station of Panama, so called from a large Panama tree near which Mr. Baily had built his rancho.

Up to this place manifestly there could be no difficulty in cutting a canal; beyond, the line of survey follows the small stream of El Cacao for another league and then crosses the mountain; but there was such a rank growth of young trees that it was impossible to continue without sending men forward to clear the way. We therefore left the line of the canal and, crossing the valley to the right, we reached the foot of the mountain over which the road to Nicaragua passes. A path had been opened for carrying Mr. Baily's supplies to

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4. On this page and again on pp. 327-328, Stephens refers to a Nicaraguan town now usually called Rivas. He was already in the country of Nicaragua.

5. The editor has been unable to identify ranges with these names, the correct spellings of which are probably *Cebadea* and *El Platino*.

that station, but it was difficult to find it. We took a long draught at a beautiful stream called Loco de Agua, and my guide pulled off his shirt and commenced with his machete. It was astonishing how he found anything to guide him, but he knew a tree as the face of a man. The side of the mountain was very steep, and besides large trees, was full of brambles, thorn bushes, and ticks. I was obliged to dismount and lead my macho; the dark skin of my guide glistened with perspiration, and it was almost a climb till we reached the top.

Coming out into the road, we found the change beautiful. The road was about ten feet wide, straight, and shaded by the noblest trees in the Nicaragua forests. In an hour we reached the foot of the mountain, where Nicolás was waiting with the mules under the shade of a large tree, which threw its branches fifty feet from its trunk, and seemed reared by a beneficent hand for the shelter of a weary traveler. Soon we reached another of Mr. Baily's stations. Looking back, I saw the two great mountain ranges standing like giant portals, and could but think what a magnificent spectacle it would be to see a ship, with all its spars and rigging, cross the plain, pass through the great door, and move on to the Pacific. Beyond, the whole plain was on fire; the long grass, scorched by the summer's sun, crackled, flashed, and burned like powder. The road was a sheet of flame, and when the fire had passed, the earth was black and hot. We rode some distance on the smoking ground along the line of flame, and finding a favorable place, spurred the mules through; but part of the luggage took fire, my face and hands were scorched, and my whole body heated.

Off from the road, on the edge of the woods, and near the River Las Lajas, was another of Mr. Baily's stations. From that place the line runs direct over a plain till it strikes the same river near the Lake of Nicaragua. I attempted to follow the lines again, but was prevented by the growth of underwood.

It was late in the afternoon, and I hurried on to reach the *camino real*. Beautiful as the whole country had been, I found nothing equal to this two hours before we entered Nicaragua. The fields were covered with high grass, studded



with noble trees, and bordered at a distance by a dark forest, while in front, high and towering, of a conical form, rose the beautiful volcano of the island. Herds of cattle gave it a homelike appearance.

Toward dark we again entered the woods, and for an hour saw nothing, but at length we heard the distant sound of the vesper bell, and very soon were greeted by the barking of dogs in the suburbs of Nicaragua. Fires were burning in the streets, which served as kitchens for the miserable inhabitants, and at which they were cooking their suppers. We passed round a miserable plaza and stopped at the house of the *licenciado* Pineda. A large door was wide open; the *licenciado* was swinging in one hammock, his wife and a mulatto woman in another. I dismounted and entered his house, and told him that I had a letter to him from Don Manuel de Aguilar. He asked me what I wished, and when I told him a night's lodging, said that he could accommodate me, but had no room for the mules. I told him that I would go to the cura, and he said that the cura could do no better than he. In a word, his reception of me was very cool. I was indignant and went to the door, but without it was dark as Erebus. I had made a long and tiresome journey through a desolate country, and that day had been one of extreme labor.

The first words of kindness came from the lady of the *licenciado*. I was so tired that I was almost ready to fall; I had left San José with the fever and ague, had been twelve days in the saddle, and the last two nights I had slept in the open fields. I owe it to both of them, however, to say that, once the ice was broken, they did all they could for my comfort; and, in fact, treated me with distinguished attention. A traveler never forgets kindness shown him in a strange land, and I never felt so sensible of it as in Central America; in other countries, with money, a man can command comforts, but here, whatever his means may be, he is entirely dependent upon individual hospitality.

The whole of the next morning I devoted to making inquiries on the subject of the canal route. More is known of it in the United States than at Nicaragua. I did not find

one man who had been to the port of San Juan, or who even knew Mr. Baily's terminating point on the Lake of Nicaragua. I was obliged to send for my old guide, and after a noonday dinner started for the lake. The town consisted of a large collection of straggling houses, without a single object of interest. Though Nicaragua is the richest state in the confederacy in natural gifts, its population is the most miserable.

Passing through the suburbs, very soon we entered the woods and rode under a beautiful shade. We met no one. Before reaching the lake we heard the waves breaking upon the shore like the waves of the sea, and when we emerged from the woods the view before us was grand. On one side no land was visible; a strong north wind was sweeping over the lake, and its surface was violently agitated; the waves rolled and broke upon the shore with solemn majesty, and opposite, in the center of the lake, were the islands of Isola and Madera with giant volcanoes rising as if to scale the heavens. The great volcano of Ometepe reminded me of Mount Etna, rising, like the pride of Sicily, from the water's edge, a smooth unbroken cone, to the height of nearly six thousand feet.

We rode for an hour along the shore, and so near the water that we were wetted by the spray. The bank was all wooded; and in one place, on a little clearing by the side of a stream, was a hut occupied by a mulatto, the view from which princes might envy. Farther on we passed some women washing, and at a distance of a league and a half we reached the River Las Lajas, which, according to Mr. Baily's survey, was the terminating point on the lake. A flock of wild fowl were sitting on the water, and long-legged birds, with wings outstretched, were walking on the shore.

I had now examined, as well as circumstances would permit, the canal route from the Pacific to the Lake of Nicaragua. A direction had been given to my investigations by getting on the track of Mr. Baily's survey, but I should be able to communicate nothing if it were not for Mr. Baily himself, whom I afterward met at Granada. This gentleman is a half-pay officer in the British navy. Two years before

he was employed by the government of Central America to make a survey of this canal route, and he had completed all except the survey of an unimportant part of the River San Juan when the revolution broke out. The states declared their independence of the general government, and disclaimed all liability for its debts. Mr. Baily had given his time and labor, and when I saw him he had sent his son to make a last appeal to the shadow of the Federal government; but before he reached the capital this government was utterly annihilated, and Mr. Baily remains with no reward for his arduous services beyond the satisfaction of having been a pioneer in a noble work. On my arrival at Granada he laid before me all his maps and drawings with liberty to make what use of them I pleased. I passed an entire day in taking notes and memoranda, and in receiving explanations. The measurements which I have recorded<sup>6</sup> began on the side of the Pacific Ocean, and were carried over to the Lake of Nicaragua; the levels were taken from Mr. Baily's survey. To sum up these measurements: The length from the Pacific Ocean to the Lake of Nicaragua is 28,365 $\frac{2}{3}$  yards, or 15 $\frac{2}{3}$  miles. The sum of the ascents is 1047 feet 5.45 inches; the sum of the descents is 919 feet 2.4 inches; and the difference, 128 feet 3.05 inches, is the height of the lake above the Pacific Ocean at low water.

We now come to the communication with the Atlantic by means of the Lake of Nicaragua and the River San Juan. The lake is ninety-five miles long and, in its broadest part, about thirty; it averages, according to Mr. Baily's soundings, fifteen fathoms of water. The length of the river, by measurement with all its windings from the mouth of the lake to the sea, is seventy-nine miles. There are no cataracts or falls; all the obstructions are from rapids, and it is at all times navigable both up and down for piraguas drawing from three to four feet of water.

From the lake to the river of El Sábalo, a distance of about eighteen miles, the depth is from two to four fathoms.

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6. Stephens detailed record of these measurements is given on pp. 343-346.

At El Sábalo commence the rapids of Toros, which extend for one mile with water from one and a half to two fathoms deep. The river is then clear for four miles, with an average depth of from two to four fathoms. Then come the rapids of the Old Castle, but little more than half a mile in extent, with water from two to four fathoms. The river is clear again for about two miles, with water from two and a half to five fathoms, where begin the rapids of Mico and Las Balas, connected and running into each other, and both together not more than a mile, with water from one to three fathoms. The river then runs clear for one mile and a half to the rapids of Machuca; these rapids, which extend for a mile, are the worst of all, the water being more broken from running over a broken rocky bottom.

From this point the river is clear and without any obstruction for ten miles to the River San Carlos, with water from two to seven fathoms, and then for eleven miles, with some islands interspersed to the River Sarapiquí, with water from one to six fathoms, the measurements of one fathom being about the points or bends, where there is an accumulation of sand and mud. It then continues seven miles clear, with water from two to five fathoms, to the Río Colorado. The River Colorado runs *out* of the San Juan in another direction into the Atlantic. The loss to the latter, according to measurement taken in the month of May, 1839, was twenty-eight thousand one hundred and seventy-eight cubic yards of water per minute; in the month of July of the same year, during the rising of the waters, it was eighty-five thousand eight hundred and forty yards per minute. This immense body of water might be saved to the San Juan by damming up the mouth of the River Colorado.

From this point there are thirteen miles, with soundings of from three to eight fathoms. The bottom is of sand and mud, and there are many small islands and aggregations of sand without trees, very easily cleared away. The last thirteen miles might be reduced to ten by restoring the river to its old channel, which has been filled up by collections, at points, of drifted matter. An old master of a piragua told Mr. Baily that within his memory trees grew half a mile

back. The soundings were all taken with the plotting scale when the river was low, and the port of San Juan, though small, Mr. Baily considers unexceptionable.

The detailed memoranda were placed in the hands of my friend, Mr. Horatio Allen, the engineer on our Croton Aqueduct, who kindly prepared from them the plan shown in figure 32.

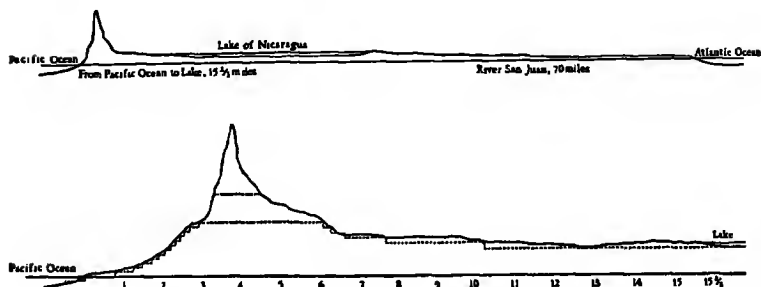


FIG. 32 *Profile of Nicaragua Canal*

I ought perhaps to remark, for the benefit of those who are not familiar with such plans, that in order to bring the profile of the country within a small compass, the vertical lines, which represent elevations and depressions, are on a scale many times greater than the base lines or horizontal distances. Of the former, the scale is one thousand feet, and of the latter it is twenty miles to the inch. This, of course, gives a distorted view of the country; but, to preserve the relative proportions, it would be necessary for the base line in the plan to be one thousand times longer.

The whole length of the canal from the Lake of Nicaragua to the Pacific is fifteen and two-thirds miles. According to the plan, in the first eight miles from the lake but one lock is necessary. In the next mile sixty-four feet of lockage are required. In the next three miles there are about two of deep cutting and one of tunnel, and then a descent of two hundred feet in three miles by lockage to the Pacific.

So much for the canal across the isthmus. The Lake of Nicaragua is navigable for ships of the largest class down

to the mouth of the River San Juan. This river has an average fall of one and six-sevenths feet per mile to the Atlantic. If the bed of the river cannot be cleared out, a communication can be made either by lock and dam, or by a canal along the bank of the river. The latter would be more expensive, but, on account of the heavy floods of the rainy season, it is preferable.

I am authorized to state that the physical obstructions of the country present no impediment to the accomplishment of this work. A canal large enough for the passage of boats of the usual size could be made at a trifling expense. A tunnel of the length required is not considered a great work in the United States. According to the plan of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, a tunnel is contemplated upward of four miles in length. The sole difficulty is the same which would exist in any route in any other region of country, that is, the great dimensions of the excavation required for a ship canal.

The data here given are, of course, insufficient for great accuracy; but I present a rough estimate of the cost of this work, furnished me with the plan. It is predicated upon the usual contract prices in the United States, and I think I am safe in saying that the cheapness of labor in Nicaragua will equalize any advantages and facilities that exist here. The total of the estimate which follows is about the same as the sum contemplated as the cost of our enlarged Erie Canal.

|                                                                                  |                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| From the lake to the east<br>end of the tunnel, from...                          | \$ 8,000,000 to \$10,000,000       |
| Descent to the Pacific.....                                                      | \$ 2,000,000 to \$ 3,000,000       |
| From the lake to the At-<br>lantic, by canal along the<br>bank of the river..... | \$10,000,000 to \$12,000,000       |
|                                                                                  | <hr/> \$20,000,000 to \$25,000,000 |

The idea of a communication between the Atlantic and Pacific is not new. Columbus wore out the last days of his checkered life in searching for a natural passage, and the vastness and sublimity of the enterprise suited the daring imagination of the early Spaniards.

From the formation of the continent and the falling off in height of the range of the Andes, it has ever since engaged

the attention of reflecting men. Even during the deathlike sleep of Spanish dominion a survey was made under the direction of the captain-general; but the documents remained buried in the archives of Guatemala until the emancipation of the colonies, when they were procured and published by Mr. Thompson,<sup>7</sup> who visited that country under a commission from the British government.

In 1825 an envoy-extraordinary from the new Republic of Central America called the special attention of our government to the canal project, requesting our co-operation in preference to that of any other nation; he proposed, by means of a treaty, "effectually to secure its advantages to the two nations." As a result a chargé d'affaires was appointed by our government who was specially instructed to assure the government of Central America of the deep interest of the United States in the execution of an undertaking "so highly calculated to diffuse an extensive influence on the affairs of mankind," and to investigate with the greatest care the facilities offered by the route, and to remit the information to the United States.

Unfortunately, being far removed from the capital, none of our diplomatic agents ever visited the spot. But, in 1826, as appears by documents accompanying the report of a committee of the House of Representatives on a memorial "praying the aid of the government of the United States in procuring the construction of a ship channel or navigable canal across the isthmus between North and South America," a contract was made by the government of Central America with the agent of a New York company, under the name, style, and designation of the "Central American and United States' Atlantic and Pacific Canal Company." Although the names of Dewitt Clinton and other most distinguished men

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7. G. A. Thompson, *Narrative of an Official Visit to Guatemala from Mexico*, London, 1829. Stephens calls attention to the fact that Baily knew of the prior survey made by the captain-general; that he had even helped Thompson gain access to it; and that the work appeared much more easy by the captain-general's survey than by Baily's, but that the former survey purports to have been taken by the water level.

of that day appear as associates, the scheme fell through.

In 1830 the government of Central America made another contract with a society of the Netherlands, under the special patronage of the King of Holland, who embarked in it a large amount of his private fortune; but, owing to the difficulties between Holland and Belgium, and the separation of the two countries, this also fell through.

On the third of March, 1835, a resolution passed the Senate of the United States, "that the president be requested to consider the expediency of opening negotiations with the governments of other nations, and particularly with the governments of Central America and Granada,<sup>8</sup> for the purpose of effectually protecting, by suitable treaty stipulations with them, such individuals or companies as may undertake to open a communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, by the construction of a ship canal across the isthmus which connects North and South America, and of securing forever, by such stipulations, the free and equal right of navigating such canal to all nations, on the payment of such reasonable tolls as may be established, to compensate the capitalists who may engage in such undertaking and complete the work."

Under this resolution a special agent appointed by General Jackson was instructed to proceed without delay by the most direct route to Port San Juan, ascend the River San Juan to the Lake of Nicaragua, and thence by the contemplated route of communication, by canal or railroad, to the Pacific Ocean. After having completed an examination of the route of the canal, he was directed to repair to Guatemala, the capital of that Republic, and, with the aid of Mr. DeWitt, the *chargé d'affaires* of the United States, procure all such public documents connected with the subject as might be had, and especially copies of all such laws as may have been passed to incorporate companies to carry into effect the undertaking of any convention or conventions that may have been entered into with a foreign power upon the sub-

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8. In Stephens' day, Colombia was known as the Republic of New Granada.



ject, and of any plans, surveys, or estimates in relation to it. From Guatemala he was directed to proceed to Panama, and make observations and inquiries relative to the proposed connection of the two oceans at that point.

Unfortunately, from the difficulty of procuring a conveyance to the River San Juan, the agent went to Panama first; from adverse circumstances he never did reach Nicaragua, and on his return to this country died before reaching Washington. From his imperfect report, it appears to be the result of his observations that a ship canal was not practicable across the Isthmus of Panama. It was therefore valuable in that it turned attention, which was before divided between the two routes, exclusively to that by the Lake of Nicaragua. In regard to this route much has been written, many speculations and even estimates of the cost of constructing the canal have been made, but the actual knowledge on the subject has been very limited. In fact, the notes from Mr. Baily's survey in this volume are the most reliable data that have ever been published. I can but hope that the same liberal spirit which prompted the sending out of an agent may induce our government to procure from Mr. Baily and to give to the world the whole of his maps and drawings.<sup>9</sup>

As yet the subject of this communication has not taken any strong hold upon the public mind. It will be discussed, frowned upon, sneered at, and condemned as visionary and impracticable. Many in established business will oppose it as deranging the course of their trade. Capitalists will not risk their money in an unsettled and revolutionary country. The pioneers will be denounced and ridiculed, as Clinton was when he staked his political fortunes upon the "big ditch" that was to connect the Hudson with Lake Erie; but, if the peace of Europe be not disturbed, I am persuaded that the time is not far distant when the attention of the whole civilized and mercantile world will be directed toward it, and steamboats will give the first impulse. In less than a year,

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9. T. Saunders of London published a general history of Central America by John Baily in 1850. In the same year Saunders also published a map of Central America showing the proposed routes between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans engraved from the original drawings of John Baily.

English mailboats will be steaming to Cuba, Jamaica, and the principal ports of Spanish America, touching once a month at San Juan and Panama. To men of leisure and fortune, jaded with rambling over the ruins of the Old World, a new country will be opened. After a journey on the Nile, a day in Petra, and a bath in the Euphrates, English and American travelers will be bitten by mosquitoes on the Lake of Nicaragua, and will drink champagne and Burton ale on the desolate shores of San Juan on the Pacific. The random remarks of the traveler for amusement, and the observations of careful and scientific men, will be brought together, a mass of knowledge will be accumulated and made public, and in my opinion the two oceans will be united.

In regard to the advantages of this work I shall not go into any details; I will remark, however, that on one point there exists a great and very general error. In the documents submitted to Congress before referred to, it is stated that "the trade of the United States and of Europe with China, Japan, and the Indian Archipelago would be facilitated and increased by reason of shortening the distance above four thousand miles;" and in that usually correct work, the *Modern Traveler*, it is stated that from Europe "the distance to India and China would be shortened more than 10,000 miles!" but by measurement on the globe the distance from Europe to India and China will not be shortened at all. This is so contrary to the general impression that I have some hesitation in making the assertion, but it is a point on which the reader may satisfy himself by referring to the globe. The trade of Europe with India and Canton, then, will not necessarily pass through this channel from any saving of distance; but, from conversations with masters of vessels and other practical men, I am induced to believe that, by reason of more favorable latitudes for winds and currents, it will be considered preferable to the passage by the Cape of Good Hope. At all events, all the trade of Europe with the western coast of the Pacific and the Polynesian Islands, and all her whale fishing, and *all* the trade of the United States with the Pacific without the exception of a single vessel, would pass through it. The amount of saving in time, interest of

money, navigating expenses and insurance, by avoiding the stormy passage around Cape Horn, I have no data for calculating.

On broad grounds, this work has been well characterized as "the mightiest event in favour of the peaceful intercourse of nations which the physical circumstances of the globe present to the enterprise of man." It will compose the distracted country of Central America; turn the sword, which is now drenching it with blood, into a pruning hook; remove the prejudices of the inhabitants by bringing them into close connection with people of every nation; furnish them with a motive and a reward for industry; and inspire them with a taste for making money, which, after all, opprobrious as it is sometimes considered, does more to civilize and keep the world at peace than any other influence whatever. A great city will grow up in the heart of the country, with streams issuing from it, fertilizing as they roll into the interior; her magnificent mountains and valleys, now weeping in desolation and waste, will smile and be glad. The commerce of the world will be changed, the barren region of Tierra del Fuego be forgotten, Patagonia become a land of fable, and Cape Horn live only in the recollection of sailors and insurers. Steamboats will go smoking along the rich coasts of Chile, Peru, Equador, Granada, Guatemala, California, our own Oregon Territory, and the Russian possessions on the borders of Behring's Straits. New markets will be opened for products of agriculture and manufactures, and the intercourse and communion of numerous and immense bodies of the human race will assimilate and improve the character of nations.

The whole world is interested in this work. I would not speak of it with sectional or even national feeling; but if Europe is indifferent, it would be glory surpassing the conquest of kingdoms to make this greatest enterprise ever attempted by human force entirely our own work; nay, more, to make it, as it was once attempted, entirely the work of our city; for it is to furnish a new field for the action of that tremendous power which, first brought into being under our own eyes, is now changing the face of the whole moral,

social, and political world. Is it too much to hope that, in honor of services poorly paid but never to be forgotten, a steamboat bearing the glorious name of Fulton may start from the spot where he made his first experiment, and open the great "highway of nations" to the Pacific Ocean?

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27. At three o'clock in the morning we left the yard of the *licenciado*. The inhabitants of the town were still sleeping. At daylight we passed a village, where, before the door of one of the houses, a traveler was making preparation to set out on a journey. We accosted him, and he said that he would overtake us on the road. At eight o'clock we reached a house, where we stopped to breakfast. The hospitality of Central America is in the country and in the villages; here I never knew it to fail. The traveler may stop where he pleases, and have house, fire, and water free, paying only for the articles which he consumes. We had milk in abundance, and the charge was six cents.

Before we resumed our journey the traveler whom we had passed at the last village arrived, and, after he had taken chocolate, we all started together. He was a merchant, on his way to León, accoutered in the style of the country, with pistols, sword, spatterdashes, and spurs. As he was then suffering from fever and ague, he wore a heavy woollen poncho, a striped cotton pocket handkerchief around his head, and over it two straw hats, one inside of the other. A young man, mounted and armed with a gun, was driving a cargo mule, and three *mozos* with machetes followed on foot.

The whole of this region along the coast of the Pacific is called the *Tierra Caliente*. At half past two, after a desperately hot and dusty ride without any water, we reached a hacienda, the name of which I have lost. It was built of poles and plastered with mud. The major-domo was a white man, in bad health but very obliging, who lived by selling occasionally a fowl or a few eggs to a traveler, and corn and water for mules. There were no more of those beautiful streams which had given such a charm to my journey in Costa Rica; the earth was parched, and water a luxury sold

for money. There was a well on the hacienda, and I paid two cents apiece for our mules to drink. There was a bedstead in the hut, and at four o'clock I lay down for a few moments' rest, but I did not waken till five the next morning. On a line with the head of my bed was a long log, squared and hollowed out, with a broad lid on the top secured by a lock and key, which contained the corn and household valuables; on the top of this crude bed were sleeping a woman, rather yellow, and a little girl. I took chocolate, and in a few minutes was in the saddle. Very soon we came in sight of the highlands of Mombacho, a high, dark range of mountains behind which stood Granada,<sup>10</sup> which in half an hour we entered. Built by those hardy adventurers who conquered America, even yet this city is a monument worthy of their fame. The houses are of stone, large and spacious, with balconies to the windows of turned wood, and projecting roofs with pendent ornaments of wood curiously carved.

I rode to the house of Don Federico Derbyshire, to whom I had a letter from friends in New York. Don Federico had gone to the United States, but his clerk, a young Englishman, offered me the house, gave me a room, and in a few moments my traveling clothes were off and I was in the street. My first visit was to Mr. Bailly, who lived nearly opposite with an English lady whose husband had died two years before, and who, besides carrying on his business, received into her house the few Englishmen or foreigners whom chance brought to that place. My appearance at Granada created surprise, and I was congratulated upon my liberation or escape from prison. News had reached there that I had been arrested (I do not know for what) and was in prison in San Salvador; as all news had a party bias, it was told as another of the outrages of General Morazán.

The house of this lady was a comfort to a battered traveler. I could have remained there a month, but unfortunately, I heard news which did not allow me much time for

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10. Stephens refers here to the Nicaraguan city of Granada, not to the Republic of New Granada (cf. note 8 of this chapter).

rest. The black clouds which hung over the political horizon had burst, and civil war had broken out anew. The troops of Nicaragua, fourteen hundred strong, had marched into Honduras and, uniting with those of the latter state, had routed with great slaughter the troops of Morazán stationed at Tegucigalpa. The latter consisted of but four hundred and fifty men, under the command of General Cabañas, and the records of civil wars among Christian people nowhere present a bloodier page. No quarter was given or asked. After the battle, fourteen officers were shot in cold blood, and not a single prisoner lived as a monument of mercy. Cabañas, fighting desperately, escaped. Colonel Galindo, to whom I have before referred as having visited the ruins of Copán, known both in this country and in Europe for his investigation of the antiquities of that country, and to whom I had a letter of introduction from Mr. Forsyth, was murdered. After the battle, in attempting to escape with two dragoons and a servant boy, he had passed through an Indian village, where they were recognized and all murdered with machetes. A disgraceful quarrel ensued between Quijano and Ferrera, the leaders of the Nicaragua and Honduras troops, for the paltry spoils; the former got Ferrera into his power, and for twenty-four hours had him under sentence to be shot. Afterward the matter was accommodated, and the Nicaraguans returned to León in triumph with three hundred and fifty muskets, several stands of colors, and as a proof of the way in which they had done their work, without a single prisoner.

At San Salvador there had been an ominous movement. General Morazán had resigned his office of chief of the state, retaining command of the army, and had sent his wife and family to Chile. The crisis was at hand, the notes of war sounded fearfully, and it was all important for the prosecution of my ultimate designs and for my personal safety to reach Guatemala while yet the road was open.

I would have gone on immediately, but I felt that I might exert myself too far and break down at an awkward place. In the afternoon, in company with Mr. Baily and Mr. Wood, I walked down to the lake. At the foot of the street by which

we entered, built out into the lake, was an old fort, dismantled, and overgrown with bushes and trees, a relic of the daring Spaniards who first drove the Indians from the lake; it was probably the very fortress that Córdoba<sup>11</sup> built, and it was, in its ruins, beautifully picturesque. Under the walls, and within the shade of the fort and trees growing near it, the Indian women of Granada were washing; garments of every color were hanging on the bushes to dry and waving in the wind; women were wading out with their water-jars, passing beyond the breakers to obtain it clear of sand; men were swimming, and servants were bringing horses and mules to drink—all together they presented a beautifully animated picture. There were no boats on the water, but about half a dozen piraguas, the largest of which was forty feet long and drew three feet of water, lay on the shore.

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11. Francisco Hernández de Córdoba, principal conqueror of Nicaragua and founder of the city of Granada in 1524.

NICARAGUAN CANAL MEASUREMENTS  
RECORDED BY STEPHENS  
(*A chain equals 25 varas and a vara, 32½ inches*)

| <i>At a distance of:</i><br><i>Chains</i>                                                                                       | <i>Elevation<br/>in Feet</i> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 17.50 . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 8.93                         |
| 34.37 . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 12.04                        |
| 52.38 . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 7.99                         |
| 67.50 . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 16.82                        |
| 80.95 . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 26.90                        |
| 103.06 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 38.12                        |
| 120.07 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 52.62                        |
| 134.94 La Desperansedera de la Quebrada la Palma.<br>Boring 3½ feet, loose sand; 66 feet, clay, not<br>very firm . . . . .      | 66.12                        |
| 149.61 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 76.12                        |
| 164.71 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 94.66                        |
| 185.34 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 132.95                       |
| 201.50 Panama, water on the surface. Boring 11 feet,<br>gravel; 24 feet 5 inches, slate-stone . . . . .                         | 201.50                       |
| 221.87 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 223.00                       |
| 226.14 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 214.235                      |
| 235.48 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 241.35                       |
| 253.63 First limestone rock . . . . .                                                                                           | 284.20                       |
| 264.28 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 356.770                      |
| 273.18 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 389.700                      |
| 280.26 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 425.95                       |
| 287.01 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 461.525                      |
| 288.97 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 519.391                      |
| 292.99 Top of the Palma, and summit level. Boring 5<br>feet, yellow clay; 59 feet, stone, soft and loose.<br>No water . . . . . | 615.673                      |
| 299.05 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 570.157                      |
| 300.53 Second limestone rock . . . . .                                                                                          | 506.300                      |
| 314.11 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 460.891                      |
| 317.05 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 442.858                      |
| 319.27 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 443.899                      |
| 332.25 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 410.524                      |
| 336.92 To this point national lands . . . . .                                                                                   | 393.216                      |
| 340.28 Third limestone rock. Boring 31½ feet, water;<br>49 feet, limestone, soft and loose . . . . .                            | 350.776                      |
| 358.50 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 311.152                      |
| 361.40 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 318.235                      |
| 370.55 . . . . .                                                                                                                | 291.419                      |



| <i>Chains</i>                                                                                                                           | <i>Elevation<br/>in Feet</i> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 373.85 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 295.160                      |
| 382.86 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 283.352                      |
| 401.04 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 269.236                      |
| 409.30 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 258.378                      |
| 413.51 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 261.486                      |
| 423.75 Water on the surface. Boring 3 feet, sand; 12<br>feet, earth . . . . .                                                           | 247.780                      |
| 437.55 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 237.570                      |
| 448.90 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 250.370                      |
| 464.78 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 228.237                      |
| 477.76 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 214.695                      |
| 489.29 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 200.530                      |
| Between this and next, boring 5 feet, earth; 10<br>feet, white clay; 11 feet, water; 38 feet, soft<br>stone.                            |                              |
| 506.22 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 184.511                      |
| 510.53 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 186.869                      |
| 519.47 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 180.244                      |
| 533.04 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 170.161                      |
| 543.25 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 159.311                      |
| 545.98 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 160.411                      |
| 553.85 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 158.736                      |
| In the next six stations the elevations do not<br>differ one foot.                                                                      |                              |
| 604.82 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 153.461                      |
| 612.62 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 160.077                      |
| 622.54 Water on the surface. Boring 12 feet, sand and<br>hard stone. This station is in a hole of the Que-<br>brada, very deep. . . . . | 149.553                      |
| 627.27 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 150.052                      |
| 630.32 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 149.336                      |
| 634.20 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 157.102                      |
| 638.86 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 147.044                      |
| 643.31 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 154.785                      |
| 685.55 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 143.343                      |
| 661.35 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 155.076                      |
| 664.47 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 140.243                      |
| 671.22 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 151.185                      |
| 675.86 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 139.352                      |
| 685.93 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 150.927                      |
| 692.55 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 146.977                      |
| 696.91 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 148.569                      |
| 712.85 . . . . .                                                                                                                        | 144.436                      |

| <i>Chains</i> | <i>Elevation<br/>in Feet</i>                                                                  |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 716.17        | 149.152                                                                                       |
| 723.29        | 142.994                                                                                       |
| 728.29        | 148.552                                                                                       |
| 739.95        | 139.702                                                                                       |
| 749.10        | 164.360                                                                                       |
| 756.40        | 142.560                                                                                       |
| 760.80        | 144.830                                                                                       |
| 766.80        | 141.177                                                                                       |
| 770.61        | Water at 8 feet. Boring 12 feet, black earth;<br>22 feet, white clay; 4 feet, stone . . . . . |
|               | 142.718                                                                                       |
| 774.73        | 140.560                                                                                       |
| 779.49        | 142.743                                                                                       |
| 805.50        | 138.485                                                                                       |
| 808.31        | Water on the surface. Boring 5 feet, sand;<br>15 feet, stone . . . . .                        |
|               | 124.312                                                                                       |
| 812.01        | 139.150                                                                                       |
| 828.77        | 133.802                                                                                       |
| 832.24        | 134.377                                                                                       |
| 837.43        | 130.994                                                                                       |
| 841.76        | 129.486                                                                                       |
| 846.45        | 129.994                                                                                       |
|               | In six stations there is a difference of but<br>from one to two feet.                         |
| 880.12        | Water on the surface. Boring 9 feet, loose<br>sand; 18 feet, soft stone. . . . .              |
|               | 126.569                                                                                       |
| 887.23        | 107.553                                                                                       |
| 891.96        | 123.903                                                                                       |
| 901.22        | 118.112                                                                                       |
| 910.80        | 120.628                                                                                       |
|               | In four stations there is a difference of but<br>one foot.                                    |
| 933.74        | Boring 8 feet, black earth; 10 feet, white<br>mud; 18 feet, soft stone . . . . .              |
|               | 117.178                                                                                       |
| 957.62        | 108.802                                                                                       |
| 971.48        | 135.168                                                                                       |
| 976.30        | 107.643                                                                                       |
| 986.06        | 119.176                                                                                       |
| 992.93        | 108.576                                                                                       |
| 1001.03       | 118.592                                                                                       |
| 1006.65       | 108.692                                                                                       |
| 1014.28       | 124.808                                                                                       |
| 1033.51       | 126.663                                                                                       |
| 1036.44       |                                                                                               |

## INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL

| <i>Chains</i> | <i>Elevation<br/>in Feet</i> |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| 1043.06       | 141.416                      |
| 1047.39       | 157.583                      |
| 1062.87       | 118.042                      |
| 1068.43       | 131.942                      |
| 1077.69       | 120.584                      |
| 1083.96       | 125.784                      |
| 1100.19       | 135.709                      |
| 1113.35       | 152.176                      |
| 1128.97       | 127.201                      |
| 1133.79       | 163.276                      |
| 1140.94       | 129.776                      |
| 1145.18       | 151.401                      |
| 1156.44       | 129.335                      |
| 1176.61       | 140.835                      |
| 1190.87       | 129.396                      |
| 1193.77       | 132.801                      |
| 1203.21       | 128.093                      |
| 1210.14       | 140.985                      |
| 1223.50       | 128.243                      |

